8 July 1977 25p USA & Canada $1 By Air

NEW STATESMAN

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For Bhutto or For Worse

Few tears are likely to be shed over the political demise of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Although he came to power at the most difficult of times – in the aftermath of the Bangladesh war – his one real achievement was to take his country safely through the period of crisis and dismemberment which followed. Many, including socialists in Pakistan, had high hopes for him when he first flew back from the United Nations to take over the debris of a nation back in 1971; but by the end he had disappointed many among even his former closest associates. A man of great intelligence and ability, he increasingly came to rely on the methods of repression in order to preserve his own personal predominance. His rule depended on a subservient press and radio, on continual arrests which did not always lead to trials and, when necessary, on ordering the police and troops to fire on crowds. When in March this year he reconciled himself to holding an election, qualified observers and indeed Pakistani judges agreed that the poll was rigged. Although he may well have had the votes to win legitimately, it was clear that he had already lost much of his original popularity. Not only his opponents began to suspect that there would ultimately be no way of getting rid of him except through a military coup. This has now occurred.

Is this, then, a moment of liberation to be classed with the reassertion of Indian democracy which inflicted justified retribution on Mrs Gandhi? Alas, Pakistan differs from India in two lamentable respects. The Pakistan opposition grouping, known as the Pakistan National Alliance, is nothing like India's Janata Party, and it has no leaders of the vision and integrity of J. P. Narayan and Morarji Desai. Bhutto's main merit was a belief, though in his last days he appeared to surrender even that, in the secular state; the luminaries of the PNA are a set of obscurantists, dedicated to the supremacy of Islam in its most bigoted form.

More relevant to this week's news is the special position of the Pakistani army, a 350,000-strong force still resentful over its failures in battle and the loss of Bangladesh. While the Indian army has maintained a scrupulous political neutrality, Pakistan's generals have adhered for 30 years to the belief that they are the proper people to run the country. While reasonable men hoped that the recent negotiations between Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party and the NPA would lead to compromise and to fair elections, the generals were merely impatient with the length of these talks and saw their initiation as proof of weakness. Politicians of all stripes, PNA as well as PPP, have now been taken into what is ominously called 'temporary protective custody'.

So, for the third time in its brief history, Pakistan comes under undisguised and unmitigated military rule. The common feature in the military dictatorships is not merely that they are historically regressive and repugnant to civilised notions of government; it is also that, even in terms of stability and national strength, they are failures. Field-Marshal Ayub Khan made a valiant effort to sell himself in the West as a strong man; but, when challenged, his regime proved to be built on sand. General Yahya Khan, to his fury, was defeated on the battle-field by a democratically elected Hindu woman; *his* regime collapsed in the wreckage of the Bangladesh war. Now it is the turn of General Mohammed Zia-ul-Haque to dictate his bombastic statements to the captive radio station. Precedent, at all events, does not suggest that historians will find it worthwhile to memorise his name.

Pakistan, an important country with a reputable level of education and culture, has manifestly never had the political life that it deserves. Its sufferings, however, illustrate a problem that plagues most of the Third World. How is it possible to devise a form of government which ensures domestic peace, invites popular participation in conditions of freedom, and also creates conditions for an assault on intolerable poverty? We have been told repeatedly, and often in patronising language, that the answer is not to be found in a naïve imitation of 'Westminster democracy'. But an assertion of absolute power by the men who, at a propitious moment, have guns in their hands is not the answer either.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Saffron Walden Speaks Its Mind

Here we are in Wendens Ambo, braving the midday sun. How beautiful it is. The station car park is full. The heat is building up in the glove compartments, and it would be wiser not to touch the long sloping bonnets of the limousines. The owners of the limousines are in London, sitting behind large desks, behind that brown plate glass which will protect them from the glare. They arrived at the station at eight this morning, and found their newspapers ready for them, weighted down with stones, with their names written clearly on the top right-hand corner of the front page. They pushed back the arm-rests in the carriage, and sat four to a side. They all know each other. They spent the first part of the journey reading the *Financial Times*, but when they reached the outskirts of London they were all relaxing with the *Daily Mail*. At this very moment they are thinking: 'Better take a later train home tonight, if this heat continues.' They phone their wives to tell them their plans. All over the North Essex countryside, in beautiful houses with short gravel drives, the telephones are ringing.

But here in the car park at Wendens Ambo there is a rather more surprising noise. From the loudspeaker car, the distinctive voice of Enoch Powell is heard explaining the loss of sovereignty involved in membership of the EEC. The voice rises and falls for a moment. Then it is switched off. The workers in the anti-EEC campaign wear purple favours, and their candidate, Oliver Smedley, arrives with a purple velvet tie and a purple pocket handkerchief and a a large, plasticated Union Jack dangling from his blazer lapel. Why purple? Well, he was born on the cusp between Pisces and Aquarius, and you know everyone born on the cusp between Pisces and Aquarius likes purple. He has written a song about it. Would we like to hear?

> Neither Pisces nor Aquarius,
> But exactly in between,
> On the nineteenth Februarius . . .

He sent the song to Prince Andrew, who was also born on the cusp, but the Palace wrote saying the Prince was not allowed to accept presents. Oh yes he was, Smedley wrote back, he'd accepted a birthday present the year before. Oh, said the Palace, well in that case . . .

Major Smedley belongs in the nonsense tradition of English politics – a tradition in its way as honourable as the nonsense tradition in English verse. He was the only candidate worth talking to in the Saffron Walden by-election, because he was the only one with the vaguest grasp of his own ludicrousness. He would set a theory, become excited at a prospect, develop it for a while and then – pouf – in a moment of blinding lucidity he would realise that the whole thing was a tissue of nonsense from beginning to end. But the lucid moment had no sooner come than it was gone. Another possibility suggested itself, even more alluringly than the last. Well, he said, you see, things are going our way. I've had a letter from Lord Moxon. Moxon? Monson – a letter from Lord Monson, the man who campaigned about seat-belts in the Lords. Come to think of it, I might bring seat-belts into this campaign. Good idea. Last moment. Inject a bit of life into the . . . (*lucid moment*) Still, I shouldn't think there are any votes in seat-belts, do you?

It was Major Smedley who a couple of years ago turned Wendens Ambo into Doomsday Village. The whole of the rest of England was going to be without food, but not Wendens Ambo. He would organise it so that the place would be positively floating on baked beans. And there were other practical survival measures taken, for instance a census of all the bicycles and horses in the village. More recently, in expectation of a general election, he had sold his grand piano to finance his campaign. He used to be a prominent Liberal, spent all his time trying to persuade the Liberals of the virtues of Free Trade (Lady Violet Bonham-Carter didn't have a clue what Free Trade was – didn't have a *clue*), squabbled with them over the Common Market and had to leave. If the Liberals were still the Silly Party, Major Smedley would surely have been their candidate.

Whereas the actual Liberal candidate was really a Labour candidate in disguise. His whole political formation was Labour, but he had been too violently pro-EEC to put up with Wilson's treachery on the issue. His name was Andrew Phillips – the perfect all-purpose candidate. You name it, Andrew Phillips had done it. Had he not 'joined the Labour Party under Gaitskell's influence'? Had he not fought Harwich in 1970, increasing the Labour vote by 1,400 *against the trend*? Had he not been Treasurer of the Society of Labour Lawyers? Had he not written a Fabian pamphlet? Was he not one of the three founders of the Legal Action Group, a founder director of Social Audit *and* the Public Interest Research Centre *and* Antipoverty? Had he not travelled in 30 countries, been a lifelong adherent of the EEC *and* its ideals, spent three years in the Cambridge University Choir, been a fairly regular broadcaster and an occasional contributor to the *Guardian* (copies available), advised the United Nations Association on political affairs, been special legal adviser to the Samaritans? Was he not keen on rugby, village cricket, tennis, squash, golf and (formerly) hockey? Was he not an ecumenical Anglian married to a Catholic wife?

Yes he was all of these things, and many more besides. Good-looking, a smooth talker, so fluent at the rostrum that it seemed incredible he should have time to *think* as well as say all the noble things he said, *and*, finally, capable of passing off as fair a load of balderdash as I have had luck to hear. The great thing that would distinguish him from the normal run of politicians, he said, was that he did not believe in the iniquitous whipping system. Labour and Tory MPs were never allowed to vote against their beliefs, but *he* would exercise his discretion to the maximum. He spoke at length about this great freedom of conscience he would enjoy, without ever mentioning the existence of Liberal whips. He gave the impression that the Liberals were above such low tricks – which was odd, considering that the whole theme of the meeting hitherto had been support of the Government (conditional support, of course, but nevertheless of a kind which would mean a greater discipline in voting than the Liberals have needed to exercise for years).

David Steel appeared in Saffron Walden to be in a rather cautious mood. He did not want to overemphasise the importance of the by-election to the future of the pact and of his party. Indeed he was so cautious that at one point he almost had to remind himself to show confidence that the Liberals would do very well. The meeting he addressed was packed out, and it went well. There was general agreement in the town that the Liberals had fought hard and well, they had set people talking, even if they had not won them over. Nevertheless the campaign had not really caught alight. It was, after all, essentially a fight for the second place. The Tories had an identikit Tory candidate and a vigorous party organisation. They worked hard, but they were confident as to the outcome. Labour also possessed a middle-ground candidate (it was often different to tell the three main candidates apart). He worked hard but found it impossible to get much spark into the campaign. The Liberals had the perfect candidate, and they had the greatest ambitions of all. But, when it became likely that nothing spectacular would happen, they took great care to prepare a fall-back position. Major Smedley was the man with the best analysis of his own chances. Either, he said, I shall do spectacularly well, or (*lucid moment*) incredibly badly. In either event, it appeared that he would be pleased with the result.

NEW STATESMAN

Vol 94 No 2416

Published weekly at Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ Tel: 01-405 8471
© 1977
The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co Ltd

Annual Subscription Rates

By surface mail	UK £12.50 Overseas £14 USA $30
By air mail	Europe £17.50 Middle East £19 Africa, India £20 USA, Canada $40 Australia, NZ, Far East £21

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Paul Johnson

Three Years on the Press Commission

I became a member of the Royal Commission on the Press in a slightly melodramatic fashion. When I opened the front door of the very remote house in the far north of Scotland where I had come to do some climbing, my hostess greeted me with the words: 'Number Ten on the line. The Prime Minister's office wants you.' The unspoken thought was 'How much did it cost for you to *arrange all this*?' I must confess I thought long and hard before accepting Harold Wilson's invitation, first because of the tremendous amount of time involved, second because I thought it would be largely wasted, third because, unlike most journalists, I do not find the internal affairs of the press intrinsically interesting. During the three years in which we sat, there were times when I bitterly regretted having joined – the paperwork involved is unbelievable, running into tens of millions of words – and I shall certainly never serve on another Royal Commission. But for reasons I shall explain, the experience was worthwhile,

When the Commission was appointed, it ran into general criticism on two grounds. First, it was argued, there was no need for one. Harold Wilson was angry because of criticism, chiefly in the *Mail* and the *Express*, of Marcia's involvement in the 'slag heap affair', and the Commission was a form of harassment by which Wilson hoped to get his own back on Fleet Street by exposing its shortcomings publicly. There may be some truth in the view that Wilson's fury with the press played a part; but it should be added that he gave us the widest possible terms of reference, and this invited us to pursue any hares that caught our eye, as we did. Second, it was said the membership was weak. This again was justified. The Commission included no one with direct top-level management experience in the newspaper industry, and no one with technical knowledge of the new printing processes. These were severe handicaps. Our troubles deepened when Sir Morris Finer, a superbly judicious chairman who was much respected on both sides of the industry, died suddenly when we were nearly a year into our work.

Nevertheless, during the course of three years, we became a more formidable team than anyone might have expected. Professor Oliver McGregor, of the London University social sciences department, took over as chairman and, particularly during the dramatic closing stages, when our report was actually taking shape, exhibited a masterly blend of conciliation and firmness, as though it had been for him that Aquaviva coined the phrase *suaviter in modo fortiter in re*.

Another member, the Hon. Roger Chorley, one of London's leading accountants, established early on a mastery of the finances of Fleet Street which was immensely valuable in steering us through the impenetrable thickets of the industry's loss-making machinery; and the Dean of Nuffield, Aubery Silberston, Britain's best pragmatic economist, enabled us to keep clear heads about the viability of the scores of salvage schemes submitted to us, as well as advising us on the intricacies of the monopoly legislation. These two indeed played a vital role in assessing the financial and business evidence we were given. Then, too, Lord Hunt took from the rest of us the heavy burden of examing the very complex subject of newspaper and magazine training schemes and the question of apprenticeships – something we had to cover but which he, almost singlehanded, brought to the point where the Commission as a whole was able to make clear and informed choices.

Above all, we had a first-class staff, not in any way domineering or bullying, but very hard-working, forceful, enthusiastic and highly intelligent. The staff, indeed, in the shape of Francis Golding, who took over as our Secretary in the final stages, produced the one memorable witticism of the operation. Returning from a visit to D. C. Thomson's of Dundee, which still excludes trades unions, Mr Golding remarked: 'I have seen the past – and it works!' The staff was

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assisted by a specially recruited team of research workers who were allocated specific projects, chiefly dealing with the performance of the press, at an early stage. With two exceptions, these projects proved well worthwhile; and thanks to the efforts of the staff, and our researchers, the report, with its accompanying documents, is by far the most informative state paper ever compiled on the British press. Whatever you may think of its conclusions, it has the great merits of accuracy, up-to-date figures and facts, comprehensibility, and a mass of carefully analysed original material.

New Technology

The first object of the Commission, at any rate in Wilson's mind, was to examine the wickedness of Fleet Street. But the evidence which, he told Parliament, he was going to provide for us, did not materialise. When, after long delays, we asked for it, we were told that 'legal reasons' made this impossible. It eventually did reach us, after we had drafted our final report, and it was too late to consider it. As we expected, it was old rubbish.

In the meantime, however, Fleet Street as an industry had run into the big recession and we had more important matters to consider. It was at this stage that the newspaper managements, which had hitherto treated us with disdain, decided we might be useful after all, and from that point on we got the full cooperation of both sides of industry. With their agreement, and with the consent of the Prime Minister, we began a review, as a matter of urgency, in September 1975, of the revenues, costs, financial prospects and structure of the Fleet Street papers, with special reference to the workforce and the new technology. This was published as an interim report, *The National Newspapers Industry*, in March 1976, and it was followed by a report which we commissioned from the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) *Industrial Relations in the National Newspaper Industry*, which we published at the end of last year.

As a result of these investigations, we concluded, in agreement with both sides of the industry, that the introduction of new technology, accompanied by systematic and orderly de-manning, was required to make Fleet Street viable. With our encouragement, a joint working-party was formed in Fleet Street, concrete proposals were hammered out, and eventually put to the mechanical workers. In the London chapels all the proposals were rejected, in some cases by heavy majorities. But our work was not entirely wasted. The facts and figures we painfully acquired are still true and valid; the proposals can be rapidly resurrected if and when a suitable climate returns. Most of all, there now exists permanent machinery to allow both sides of industry to meet for long-term planning discussions; and one happy outcome of the whole sorry affair was the firm working friendship which was formed between 'Duke' Hussey, managing director of Times Newspapers, on behalf of management, and Bill Keys, on behalf of the unions.

But, of course, the interim report was dealing with a crisis situation, in which new technology was seen as a means of hauling Fleet Street out of hopeless deficit. What does the Royal Commission have to say about possible structural changes? Virtually nothing. It is a highly conservative document. Why is this? The answer is simple: there is no point in putting forward utopian schemes (as the Annan Committee has foolishly done), unless there is a reasonable chance that they will be, first, adopted, and, secondly, succeed. In recent years, the British newspaper industry has become a graveyard littered with collapsed cooperatives and crackbrained schemes which never got off the ground. We live, too, in a period when control over public spending has become very severe, and is likely to remain tough for a long time to come.

In these circumstances, we were bound to approach any proposals for interfering in the market factors at work in the newspaper industry with considerable scepticism. We received massive submissions from all the main national and provincial newspaper groups, some of which were of a very high quality indeed, and all of which without

exception strongly deplored any state intervention in any form. Their message was unanimous: times are hard but we do not need any handouts, and there are a thousand practical reasons why the state should stand clear. In public, oral evidence, these points were probed and reiterated. By contrast, both the TUC and the Labour Party put forward ambitious plans for state intervention and subsidies, plans for an advertising levy, and plans for a national printing corporation. These schemes were ill-argued, indeed some were scarcely argued at all. None was able to bear cross-examination in oral evidence. Among expert witnesses, we found none who would support any of these proposals. Indeed, the episode left one with a very uneasy feeling about the quality of detailed research conducted by policy planners at the TUC and the Labour Party, which presumably applies to other topics besides the newspaper industry. The grounds on which these pathetic schemes were rejected are set out in full detail in the Royal Commission Report.

I should add that most members of the Commission originally approached the topic of state interference, indeed any topic we considered, with a completely open mind. I know I did. I changed my mind on a number of subjects during these three years, and so I think did every other member – with two exceptions. The first was David Basnett, general secretary of the General and Municipal Workers. The second was Geoffrey Goodman, industrial editor of the *Mirror*. I got the impression that these two gentlemen entered the Commission with their minds made up on a number of salient points – notably the need for state interference, and the gross bias against Labour and the unions in the press – and that nothing we received in oral or written evidence, and nothing which transpired in our discussions did, or could, alter their opinions in the smallest degree. They appeared to work in tandem. Both thought highly of the Labour Party-TUC evidence – and their admiration is reflected in their minority report.

The Mail Aftermath

The closed-mind tandem came to the fore again during the closing stages when the *Daily Mail* fracas over British Leyland again raised the issue of the standards and performance of the press. We had conducted an investigation of this subject, through Professor Denis McQuail, which showed conclusively that the view that there was heavy anti-union and anti-Labour bias in the news columns of the press was greatly exaggerated. Messrs Basnett and Goodman were never willing to accept the findings of this objective and scientific survey, since it conflicted with their own prejudices, and here again they registered a minority opinion. When the Leyland affair blew up, Prime Minister Callaghan, paranoid as always about the *Mail*, summoned our chairman, and demanded that the Royal Commission should conduct a special investigation.

Professor McGregor did not, as I would have done, tell Callaghan that his peremptory summons was a flagrant and impudent attempt to interfere with the constitutional independence of a Royal Commission. He quietly told the PM that the report was complete, that it covered the ground of the *Mail*'s behaviour quite adequately and that, while we were willing to add a few paragraphs referring to the Leyland affair, there could be no question of our conducting a full-scale investigation, as the Prime Minister wished. He added, however, that he would put Callaghan's request to the full Commission. This he did, and the Prime Minister was given the brush-off, once again with the two closed minds dissenting. My role in all these matters was to ensure that the closed minds remained in a minority of two only, and that none of the weaker brethren and sisters on the Commission slid into their camp.

So the Commission ended. It has certainly done no great harm. On the industrial relations side it may have done a modicum of good. It has produced a mass of valuable factual and up-to-date material, which after all is one prime function of such a

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body. I am left with one beautiful, though useless object, a red leather cabinet dispatch box. It has on it the Queen's insignia and my initials in gold. All Royal Commissioners get these free (Ministers have to pay for theirs, if they want to keep them). They look very elegant in one's sitting room, though are far too heavy for practical use as dispatch cases. Moreover, I have already contrived to lose the key of mine, and quite what is in it I do not know. Perhaps sometime in the next century a great-great-grandchild of mine will contrive to prise it open, and find a few yellowing sheets showing what Fleet Street was worrying about in 1977. My guess is that there will still be a Fleet Street then; and it will still be worrying.

Alexander Cockburn

How Radical Is Carter?

The decision was demonstrably rational, correct, protective of the taxpayers' money and even based on a campaign promise. Consequently President Carter's decision to veto production of the B-1 bomber caused universal amazement in Washington, where such an affront to tradition has scarcely occurred within living memory.

The ambush was neatly sprung. In the days before Carter made his announcement at the end of last week there was not an experienced observer – as journalists mostly describe their wives in these parts – or even a politician who did not publicly opine that the President would trim and ladle out at least a few billion to the Air Force, Rockwell International and other aerospace concerns in the hope of keeping such parties quiet for a couple of years; and indeed there was scarcely a liberal within earshot not bracing himself for the sell-out and predicting that this was the straw that would surely break his back.

All this I faithfully reported last week with only the mildest of *caveats* and so if you cabled your broker in New York forthwith to buy some Rockwell International shares, all I can say is that you are not alone in your woe. The fact is that on that Thursday morning the President came out against the production of the plane, on the grounds that there are much cheaper and more efficient ways of maintaining the balance of terror ready to hand. The following day one of those liberals who had been bracing himself for the straw that would break his back phoned me in excellent spirits.

'What would we have thought,' he said, 'if we had been told a year ago that by the early summer of 1977 an American President would have done the following things: made a commitment to withdraw troops from South Korea, stopped development of the breeder reactor, started to normalise relations with Cuba, spoken rationally of Euro-Communism, edged further from Taiwan, talked of a 'homeland' for the Palestinians, called for the demilitarisation of the Indian Ocean, pushed for a sensible treaty over the Panama Canal, criticised South Africa and some Latin American dictatorships, tried to restrain arms sales abroad, recommended production of smaller and safer automobiles and cancelled the B-1?' He paused for effect and then concluded triumphantly: 'We would have said that George McGovern was in the White House.'

Since the man in question had been opposed to Carter most of last year and had indeed worked for McGovern in 1972, it was no complex matter to see that the B-1 decision had left him feeling at ease with the world. Only a few weeks ago, after all, his old boss McGovern was attacking Carter publicly and rumbling that it was hard, after the first hundred days or so, to tell whether a Democrat or a Republican had been elected to office.

It was plainly a good thing to cancel the B-1 – but how symbolic was it actually of Carter? Highly so, in my view, in that it highlighted an aspect of his political personality somewhat obscured in the alarums and excursions of his first months in office: namely that he is a careful businessman who has upon numerous occasions stated his resolve that the federal budget will be balanced by 1981. McGovern might well have animadverted on the lethal immorality of the B-1. Carter just said it was expensive and out of date. 'You should remember,' a long-standing enemy of defence spending remarked to me, 'that liberals merely want Pentagon boondoggles to be transferred to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. And, as a matter of fact,' he continued thoughtfully, 'if they can't get the hand-outs at HEW they would like to see the money go into the Pentagon anyway.'

Carter really is running against big government in this sense, and it is a mode that constantly bewilders and splits opposition in Congress, while at the same time raising his standing in the public opinion polls. Conservatives outraged at his termination of the B-1 were mightily pleased when he insisted that reform of the social security and welfare systems should not entail a dime's extra expense by the Federal Government. Similarly, so far as the rhetoric of his foreign policy is concerned, conservatives may fume at the 'betrayal' of South Korea, or the 'sell-out' in Panama but then can go on to exult in the human rights barrage levelled at the Soviet Union. Such conservatives are appalled at Andrew Young's ad-libbing on the subject of South Africa but somewhat placated by the retrieval of the situation in Zaire and indeed by the thought that the 'talk loud and carry a small stick' approach of Carter and Young may ultimately be the only way to stabilise the situation in Southern Africa.

In all these generally deft and sometimes praiseworthy manoeuvrings by Carter there have been some clear losers. Carter's first months in office have not provoked enthusiasm in the labour movement and among the blacks and other minorities. A 'balanced budget' is enough of a Republican code phrase to alert them, quite apart from visible evidence that the Administration is not ardently shovelling money into the old cities or into vast employment programmes. It was a union organiser in California who said bitterly, in the wake of the B-1 decision, that Carter simply did not care about people. It is leaders in labour and the minorities who bitterly decry apparent postponement of national health insurance while watching Health Secretary Califano denounce rising hospital costs. A month ago Tom Wicker, one of the liberal columnists in the *New York Times* stable, said straightforwardly that 'Jimmy Carter is turning out to be the most conservative Democratic President since Grover Cleveland' and added for good measure that 'the stark fact is that the Carter economic policies have turned out to be not much different from Gerald Ford's'. This is true, except for the fact that Ford did not really believe in a balanced budget, whereas Carter as he lines up for a second term apparently does.

Finally, behind the politics of the balanced budget and rational domestic and foreign policy decisions there is the relationship of the new Administration to important and sometimes menacing elements in what we will have to call public opinion. Last week, the day before the B-1 announcement, the US Senate voted to deny federal funding of abortions. The move, which will obviously affect poor people and no one else, echoed the position of the Administration and will be commended by all foes of welfare 'chisellers'. (It will also presumably lead to growth in numbers of such welfare 'chisellers', but that is a contradiction the Senators and the Administration can apparently live with, short of introducing federally funded sterilisation programmes.)

Adjacent to such issues are two more, so far unconnected with Administration policy. They can be summed up by two names—Gary Gilmore and Anita Bryant. The demand of the former for his human and legal right to suffer the death penalty and of the latter that homosexuals' rights be curtailed were applauded by a majority of Americans. Jimmy Carter used to invoke the need for a government 'as good as the American people'. Artfully, the Southern Baptist businessman is making the most of that equivocal promise and that ambiguous moral relationship in a way that has so far confounded all opposition and most predictions, too.

New York

NEXT WEEK

Building a Nation from the Bottom

Ian Guest reports from the Yemen Arab Republic

Anthony Quinton:
The First Fabians

V. S. Pritchett:
Anthony Trollope

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David Haworth

Six Wasted Months

The six months of British presidency of the EEC Council of Ministers has come to its dreary close, a kind of Death in Luxembourg. From the start London made a great fuss of the presidential responsibility. It was, of course, a novelty but even so the smaller EEC members manage the job with fewer resources or skills: there's nothing too daunting about it except the man-hours, providing it is seen as a function in which little can be gained – despite Tony Benn's strange boasting – though much can be lost if a government takes a dyslexic approach to the European rule-book.

To judge a presidency in the abstract is somewhat unrealistic, an approach which has more to do with national self-esteem than the essential business of muddling through. Indeed, to hold the chair is a considerable disadvantage because it forces on the incumbent strangulated conventions which pretend that, for example, John Silkin and Gavin Strang are strangers to each other and would certainly never think of sharing the same plane back to London.

The EEC dearly loves a villain and John Silkin, Britain's Minister of Agriculture, fitted the role perfectly – why, he even wanted to keep food prices increases to the absolute minimum, an unforgivable ambition in the EEC context. There hadn't been such rage and excitement in the Community since James Callaghan stepped forward with his fake manifesto of 'Renegotiation'. The agricultural prices row was the high point of the British presidency, not because London got its way but because the knee-jerk reaction to the farming lobby was, for once, not allowed to operate. Mr Silkin's hostility to the community and all its works rather obscured the case he made; but the European Commission has since picked up the message that the Common Agriculture Policy's internal contradictions will have to be corrected if it is to be saved from itself.

Other anti-EEC British ministers performed well in the Council of Ministers, not least Judith Hart. Paradoxical this, but such ministers force on themselves a punctiliousness to compensate for their sentiments and in consequence give satisfaction to their partner colleagues. At official level, too, the British made a good fist of the presidency, led by the dry-ice figure of Sir Donald Maitland and his underestimated deputy Bob Goldsmith (who has a system of fining colleagues who use words like 'intagliated' when describing a problem in staff meetings). Both bore the brunt of Whitehall's constant misunderstanding of what the presidency meant. Despite all the preparation, the conviction seemed to persist back in the various government departments that the function represented a *carte blanche* for Britain to get her own way for six months.

What of the Community itself? Last week's ritual summit was a demonstration of its parlous condition – apart from falling into line with Carter's new Middle East initiative, nothing else was achieved. The value of such summits has always been doubtful, except to the French President, and when the EEC has nothing to say the time-wasting fatuity of these occasions gives needless prominence to the fact that, well, the EEC has nothing to say. Like a man walking backwards, though constantly protesting his movement represents an advance, the EEC is back-tracking from almost every policy it once embraced. It is now even in a dither about enlargement to include eventually Greece, Portugal and Spain – and possibly also Turkey. This inflation, some EEC officials are beginning to realise, will destroy the Community, as we know it (and perhaps as its founders intended it to be). They are unquestionably right. Though no minister will admit it, the inspiration for enlargement has much more to do with strategic issues and Nato than the European Commission. It is the heady pretence by people like Gaston Thorn of Luxembourg that the Community will be better when it is bigger which is so irritating, though fewer believe it as time goes by. British anti-Marketeers should relax; the EEC's self-destruct mechanism is working smoothly, efficiently.

The other British presidency – Roy Jenkins's in the Commission – is more clearly defined than it was, though hardly encouraging. He has understood he is not a super-premier of Europe, though has not yet grasped how unassailable his position is. He should make a nuisance of himself in the way Sicco Mansholt caused his presence to be felt during his nine months' tenure in the same office. It's all very well to beg permission to share a cognac with the EEC prime ministers, but is it worth much if the opportunity is used only to trade the same platitudes that come readily to their lips? Oddly, the Jenkins Commission is much less cohesive as a team than the one run by François-Xavier Ortoli. It seemed at the start there was a chance of creating – for the first time – a Commission which had a political and philosophical basis whose trademark might readily be recognised. It hasn't happened that way. The collegiate element is missing, *prima donnas* rub shoulders with nonentities, but what all of them miss is leadership. Jenkins has even failed to handle the dossier he adopted, Press and Information, with the aplomb claimed for him before his arrival. Though it has no public resonance, an ugly dispute has broken out between him and the accredited press about the handling of propaganda and news by the Commission, which is in any case the most over-publicised bureaucracy in the world.

All the Community's hopes are pinned on direct elections to the European Parliament. According to the latest EEC poll on the subject some 72 per cent of the Community population favour direct elections while rather fewer than 50 per cent say they will bother to vote when the day comes. That is understandable: for what will they vote? What will the candidates represent? Although direct elections ought to have been established shortly after the signatures on the Rome Treaty were dry, it has been a 20-year struggle to get this far. Rather than being an intrinsic part of the Community, the pervasive impression is that direct elections are a desperate expedient to keep the Community afloat. And that, in fact, for many 'Europeans' is exactly what they have become.

Direct elections might well make the EEC institutions more accountable and, given a fair wind, the Parliament could take greater powers to itself than those intended by the EEC governments. At the moment it has virtually no legislative powers and, as Professor David Coombes has pointed out in his Hansard Society report, the Parliament's opinions do not bind the Council of Ministers except in one narrow field relating to a small part of the EEC's annual budget. He believes that 'the added political authority which direct election will confer on the European Parliament may gradually force the Council to confer on it extended legislative powers; but this added authority may well be reflected more and sooner in an extension of the Parliament's influence rather than in an extension of its formal powers.' He pleads for the public to 'think European', though does not specify how this should occur. Not to do so does not mean the public will be anti-Market: it suggests rather they will be largely indifferent to the EEC institutions so long as their relevance at a time of deep economic uncertainty seems not to impinge on jobs and financial well-being.

None of this is to write off the Community. During the past few days it has established a customs union not only with its three most recent members but also with all the EFTA countries. It has been involved in trade talks with Peking. Despite indecision over the site of the joint European torus (in many ways a classic story of 'Europeanism'), the EEC's energy policy seems set on a steady course. The Community's Regional Fund is to be increased and relations with the Third World represented by those nations who signed the Lomé Convention are in good trim. On the other hand, the Commission has just scolded member states for increasing border checks on EEC citizens moving from one member country to another, though admittedly this has more to do with traffic in drugs than scent or perfume.

The Community's state of health is mixed – not to say in some instances confused. Britain has made no significant contribution to the Community's maturity. In the circumstances this is not surprising nor specially disappointing. After a fashion it works, but the manner of it doing so hardly merits a renewed polarisation of opinion in Britain as in the referendum run-up. Now and during the foreseeable future the EEC is not that important. For obvious reasons it was reasonably successful in the Sixties; for equally clear reasons, as the last six months have demonstrated, its progress in the Seventies will only be minimal.

Brussels

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John Frazer

War Nostalgia, German Style

In contrast to Britain, where war nostalgia has for so long been a boom industry, the Germans were pretty reticent until recently. Understandably perhaps – not least because of their present military dependence on the West. Now, with the fresh self-confidence that comes from being Europe's topcats, and an interval of decades, times have changed, for some.

'We Germans are the best soldiers in the world' said an advertising poster for *Zweite Weltkrieg*, incorporating the magazine's cover: a steely-faced, steel-helmeted soldier in close-up, with the caption 'Blitzkrieg against Poland'. 'The Second World War, never more dramatic and never more authentic' would-be readers are promised. It takes a rather different view from John Wayne's or David Niven's. A Berlin court had to forbid the flying of thousands of swastika flags on the city's newspaper kiosks as an advertising stunt by its publishers, the John Jahr Verlag.

Zweite Weltkrieg's publicity accurately conveys its flavour: all blood, guts and, *panzers*. *Der Spiegel*, which is after all Europe's biggest newsmagazine, cast it a decidedly disdainful eye. 'Basically, it's an historical narrative which is rich in detail but poor in interpretation, and which constantly enjoys using phrases like "Germany's forces as the principal pillar of society", and "the masterly leadership of the Blitzkrieg".' But its fore-runner *Dritter Reich*'s sales (450,000 at almost 90p each) brought a smile to the publisher's face, and encouraged him to follow-up with special editions like *The Great Battles*, *The Luftwaffe*, and *Hitler and his Generals*. Whatever the liberal intelligentsia's attitude he's clearly not too worried.

There's a great deal of scholarly material concerning the war around, of course, much of which, like the books of Joachim Fest, reaches a wide public. But the distinction between this and adrenalin-arousing nostalgia is rarely in doubt. Any German station bookstall can provide a profusion of the latter. In Münster I found a solid phalanx at even the second-string railway bookshop. Volumes on military paraphernalia and weaponry particularly abound. *The Tiger Tank*, *Stuka*, *Weapons*, and similar titles, rich in colour illustration, are often what seems to while away the boring hours on the Bundesbahn. Glancing through a recent edition of *Gong*, the mass-circulation television guide, I found a double-page advertisement headlined 'The Second World War'. In the background a line of rifle-swinging silhouettes, were making a dawn attack. This time the ad. was for a series of 50 silver medals supposedly conveying 'a complete picture of the Second World war'. And I expect, given the German passion for collecting things, additionally providing a hedge against their 4 per cent inflation rate.

The subjects are German victories, heroes and successful armaments rather than an engraved historical narrative. For example, there's a King Tiger tank, an ME 109, Stuka dive-bombers sinking allied shipping at Narvik, and the British streaming back to Dunkirk with the air filled by the Luftwaffe. On the latter, atop a German helmet, stands the British royal arms and crown. An eagle symbolically reflects German success on most medals, and on *Narvik* its claws are particularly nasty.

No mention of D-Day or El Alamein, but instead there are medals covering the 'British Invasion Attempt at Dieppe', 'Tobruk' and the 'Atlantic Wall'. People like von Runstedt, Kesselring and Dönitz are picked out for honour; so is flying ace Hans-Ulrich Rudel, since famous as a neo-Nazi, and pontificator on the duty of youth to reverse the war's verdict in the East. Hitler, Nazism, *untermenschen*, or death camps don't figure. The impression conveyed is that the war was a jolly schoolboy jape, in which nothing incorrect happened, and which in reality a Germany of 1914 vintage won gallantly.

On the 'explanatory document' binder is a cross with two diagonal swords and the date 1939 tastefully imposed. That this was the outset of an event in which some 50 million people were killed, innumerable others maimed or psychologically scarred, and the most indescribable bestialities occurred, one would never imagine. *Zweite Weltkrieg*'s editor chose the medal subjects. It's all a calculated exercise in self-glorification and celebration of war for profit which undoubtedly the Alfred Tetzlaffs will relish. (Alfred Tetzlaff is the German version of Alf Garnett, complete with little moustache and war reminiscences, who came to life when the *Till Death Us Do Part* idea was sold here. Like Alf, as reaction to the programme has shown, he's as much reality as caricature.) Even when it comes to something like philately, as *Spiegel* remarked: 'Hitler is in.' The value of Third Reich stamps has zoomed lately, and just about everybody in the German stamp world seems to be scrambling after them. At the CSU (Bavaria's Christian Social Union) party conference last June dealers were doing a particularly brisk trade.

Dr Gerhard Frey's *Nationale Zeitung* is based in Munich, too. (He was in the news sometime ago for planning a memorial to the SS war criminal Joachim Peiper at Dachau.) But I first encountered this particular vein of nostalgia in a corner newsagents in Münster, next to a Bundeswehr barracks. Centrally displayed among such respectable pillars of the German press as *Die Zeit* and the *Frankfurter Rundschau* it announced its intention to explain 'who the criminals really were who caused the war'. Later, I bought a copy at the local branch of a big department store chain. 'No Gassing of Jews in Concentration Camps' and 'What Hitler was really like – anti-German lies unmasked' said the banner headlines.

Soon I learned 'How pictures of Jews in concentration camps were falsified', and 'How the death of six million Jews was a concocted swindle'. There's also the SS old boys' organisation calendar for 1977, and jig-saw puzzles of East Prussia and Pomerania. 'Piece by piece the child can compose a picture of the Fatherland, and patriotism becomes fun.'

The Third Reich records are inescapable, and two LPs of Hitler's speeches are currently in the charts. But there are many more to choose from: 'Marching Music of the Third Reich', (including 'Bomben auf England') 'The Hitler Youth' or perhaps 'Not Guilty' - about the Nuremburg Trials. Who's selling them? The Jahr Verlag.

Out of my *Nationale Zeitung* there flopped a lavishly coloured advertising broadsheet smothered in glossy action pictures of Nazi soldiers, Rudel, anti-tank weapons, V-1s, etc. etc. What was for sale this time? Collected volumes of the Nazi propaganda magazine *Signal*, described with characteristic modesty as 'the best propaganda magazine of all time more dangerous than the V-2, more feared than the German U-Boats, for the enemy had nothing to match against it. Now for the first time in 35 years it's possible to be convinced, by your own eyes, how brilliantly the National Socialist propaganda machine operated, how subtly it created sympathy for National Socialist Germany among the people of the protected countries, and how skilfully it countered enemy propaganda.'

After more about the 'unsurpassable masterfulness of the National Socialist propagandists' it even quotes the *Daily Mail* in 1942: 'England has nothing which is equal to *Signal*.' The free gift 'Third Reich' LP that goes with it, is offered in a cover on which is stamped: 'The publication of this picture is forbidden to us. You will receive the record in another cover.' What one can get is 'a collage on the most thrilling period of German history'. And who's selling? The Jahr Verlag.

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John Griffith

Scarman to the Rescue?

One proposition uniting most Members of Parliament is that academic discussion of constitutional theory and practice is largely a waste of time – unless, of course, they happen to be conducting it themselves. And in recent weeks hardly a day has gone by without a seminar being conducted in the chamber itself. Professor Dicey and the rule of law, the separation of powers and the independence of the judiciary, the doctrine of collective responsibility, all are debated across the mace with much enthusiasm.

Nature does imitate art and it seems that happy days are here again when we listen to echoes of Mr Harold Macmillan, the last of the great politicans turned conjurer. Particularly did this seem so when the Leader of the Opposition asked the other day if the doctrine of collective responsibility had been suspended by the Government and the Prime Minister replied that he thought the doctrine should apply except in cases where he announced it did not. (This produced a classically pompous letter in *The Times* by a Fellow from an outlying Oxford college who accused Mr Callaghan of tampering with the constitution.)

The Grunwick court of inquiry is a different sort of seminar. Not so much a court as a device for promulgating a formula-solution. On 30 June Mr Callaghan told the House tht 'the more the courts stay out of industrial relations, the better it is'. If that looks like a bit of collective responsibility with Mr Foot, did the Prime Minister not feel there was some difficulty in being also collectively responsible with Mr Booth when on that same day he announced the appointment of Lord Justice Scarman to chair the inquiry? What makes a court? The wigs the gowns, the raised dais, the dock, the witness stand? Or the mind, the training, the attitude, the profession, the background of the judge who presides?

In the Commons, Mr Booth put the following proposition to the House as his contribution to the seminar:

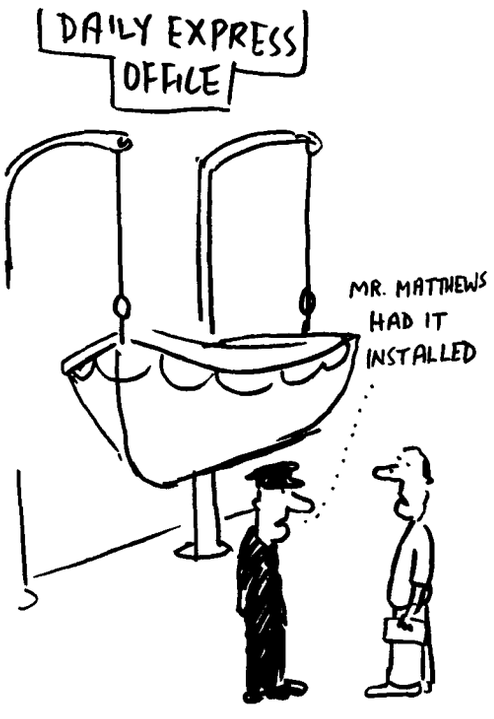
> That the rule of law is to be respected as much when it depends upon consent as when it is backed by criminal sanctions and that for people to refuse to cooperate with bodies established under the law, going about their business under the law, is in a very real sense to show a contempt for the law.

Discuss. Candidates should disregard the distinctions between civil and criminal proceedings, between mandatory and discretionary powers, and between contempt in its legal and lay meanings.

Speaking of the Scarman inquiry, Mr Booth also said: 'It would be a grave matter if either party were to ignore the recommendations of a court of such high standing.' This seems to be part of the same proposition. It means that when a body is established to conciliate or to report on an industrial dispute, and Parliament is very careful not to make the body's findings enforceable against the parties for obvious reasons, then something called the rule of law requires that the parties nevertheless first cooperate with that body and then abide by its conclusions. Despite the certainty of my being misunderstood I contribute my squeak of protest against the cant of those who confuse laws with rules governing 'cooperative' behaviour, in whatever context they do so.

The Industrial Courts Act 1919, under which the Scarman inquiry is set up, provides a means of reporting on a dispute. Not to attend its hearings when requested to do so is not illegal unless the Minister makes rules to that effect. The report of the inquiry and its recommendations are binding on no one and cannot be made so by anyone. Irrespective of the merits of the present dispute, it is hypocritical rubbish to suggest that not to abide by the recommendations of the Scarman inquiry will somehow be a breach of the rule of law. I have little sympathy for Mr Ward; I have even less for attempts to invest political actions with spurious legal sanctity.

Since 1954 13 'courts' under the chairmanship of judges have been set up under the Act of 1919 to inquire into trade disputes. They are far from being solely fact-finding inquiries, the terms of reference frequently requiring the court to have regard to the public interest or the national interest or the national economy. Recently and famously, the ubiquitous Lord Wilberforce presided in 1972 over an inquiry into miners' pay and became deeply enmeshed in job evaluation, and the social and physical conditions in the pits. His Lordship made a discovery which enabled the Government and the National Coal Board to pay the miners a large wage increase. This was that there were two factors in any possible increase. One was the periodic factor – that wages did increase from time to time – and the other was what he called the adjustment factor which meant that a time might come in any industry when a distortion or trend had to be recognised and corrected. 'The existence of these two quite separate factors,' said Lord Wilberforce's report, 'appears to have been overlooked until the present Inquiry brought it to light'. The miners got their money and went back to work but whether the Government's face was saved is doubtful.



The terms of reference of the Scarman inquiry into the Grunwick dispute appear to have been neutered. They are:

> to inquire into the causes and circumstances of, and relevant to, the dispute, other than any matter before the High Court until the final determination of those proceedings, and to report.

No reference to the national or any other interest. On precedent Scarman could produce a report which ranged widely over trade union rights and the law on picketing. Or he could limit himself to the local factors and the circumstances in which the workers were dismissed.

No marks will be given for guessing that the inquiry will report that workers should be allowed to join trade unions, that they should not be dismissed for doing so, that pickets should be peaceful but were not, that certain trouble-makers were in attendance on both sides, that the police had a difficult task which on the whole they discharged admirably.

It is difficult to see how the 'judicial' device will work this time. No one, I believe, will be over-impressed by the findings of the inquiry or by its recommendations. That is not a solid reason for saying there should be no such inquiry. But it does emphasise the purposes and the limitations of the device. The Grunwick dispute is essentially, through and through, political. Each side includes those who are fighting for a principle in which they believe. Each side is supported by 'heavies'. No doubt it is a comforting thought that political disputes can be settled by 'judicial' legerdemain. But only when both sides want a solution rather than a victory is the trick likely to work, a formula likely to be produced, which will save public faces and private virtues. And judges, once they go beyond the skills they have of ascertaining facts and understanding laws, are less rather than more likely to be able to invent solutions for industrial disputes than trained and knowledgeable trouble-shooters.

Yet even the most expert industrial court will not lift the major political parties off the hook their different, and differently imprecise, policies have impaled them on. The crucial question of fact for the Grunwick inquiry is whether or not workers were dismissed because they joined or were about to join a union. Answering that is about all Scarman will usefully be able to do. Then it will be back to the politicians, in and out of their seminars.

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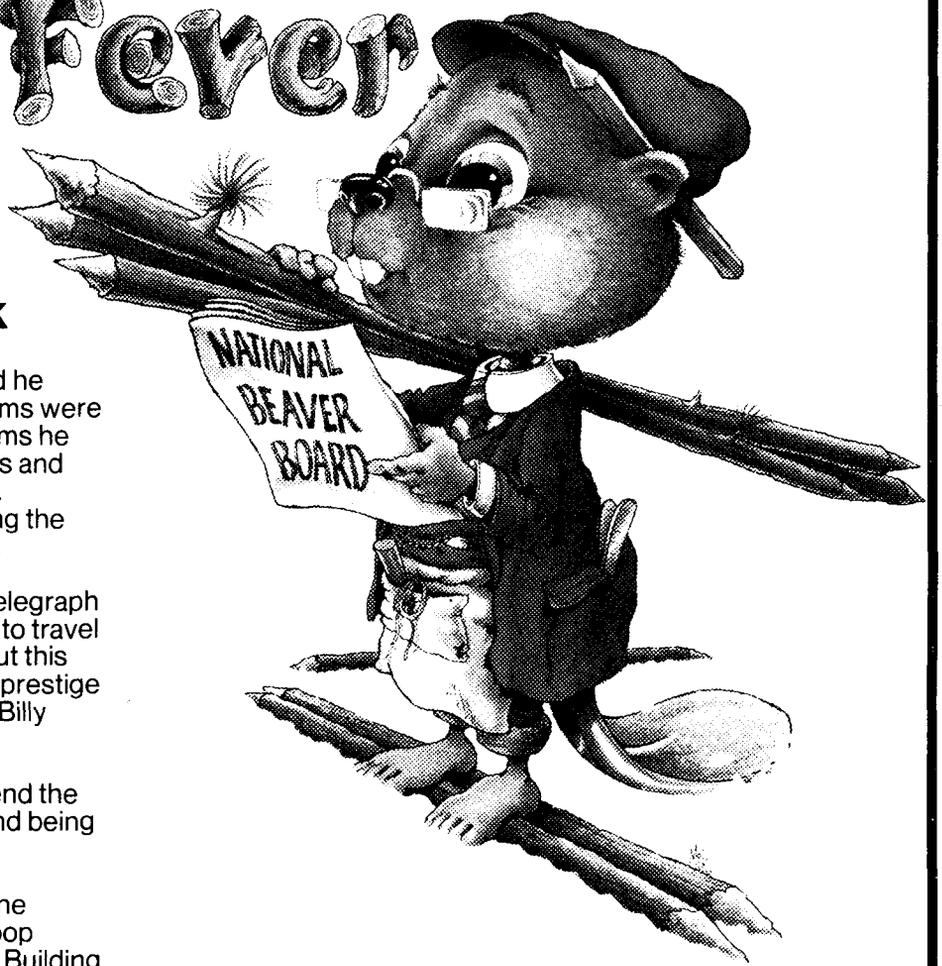
The Tragic Tale of Billy the Beaver or Beaver Fever



A Fable for Free Enterprise Week

Billy the Beaver was a Master Builder, and he lived in a pond just off the Great River. Dams were the things he built best, and inside the dams he built lodges to order, with mud foundations and alder roofing and special bark decoration. He worked quickly and economically, using the best materials. And he worked very hard.

So Billy the Beaver prospered. The river telegraph hummed with orders. Sometimes he had to travel quite long distances to meet a request, but this was only to the good, because it brought prestige and willow shoots to the colony to which Billy belonged.

One day Billy received a summons to attend the Just-Round-The-Bend Beaver Council, and being a good citizen that's just what he did.

When he got there he was asked to join the Solve-All-Your-Problems-In-One-Fell-Swoop National Beaver Building Board or Beaver Building National Board or Board for Building National Beavers or whatever it was called (Billy never did find out).

Billy didn't think this was such a good idea. Competition, with all the other Master Builders, he said, encouraged him to be economical and efficient. And anyway beavers seemed to like things the way they were because it gave them lots of choice.

"Nonsense, old comrade," said the pop-eyed President of the Council, "Under the new multi-layered, multi-directional compulsory co-operative master Planning Board we'll be a thousand times more efficient. It stands to reason."

"Hang on," cried Billy in dismay.

"Too late! Bark Strippers next!"

So Billy went to work for the NBBB or the BNBB or the BBNB or whatever it was called, and spent his time filling in forms and waiting for materials to arrive and trying to work out a system with the other builders. But they never did get even one dam finished because policies and specifications chopped and changed as the parties on the Beaver Council changed and chopped.

In the end Billy the Beaver got fed up to his gnawing teeth and swam off down the Great River to another pond where he was allowed to build what people wanted and compete with other Master Builders, and generally behave in a sensible way.

He's living there still, building better than ever. But I'm afraid everything's in a terrible mess upstream and gone completely Round the Bend. And they still haven't got one dam built.

Moral: Interference isn't worth a dam.

Published by Taylor Woodrow, in the interests of free enterprise.

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Patrick Wintour

Jack Jones's Last Stand

It sounds a bit like *Cluedo* but on the Tuesday evening before the major pay debate in a backroom meeting at the Transport and General conference a thick Scottish accent rolled out: 'Brothers and sisters we're cock-a-hoop at the moment because of what happened this morning, but let's be crystal-clear about one thing: they'll try everything in the book to divide us. There will be a lot of people in the conference hall tomorrow morning who will be utterly confused by the proceedings. We will have to hit it hard, but we will have to pace ourselves. Let's not all go up to the rostrum at once, we'll spread it out, keep putting our hands up to speak and we will show ourselves to be normal, reasonable people because that's what rattles the platform. Let's be quite clear, we will keep going till we win one thing and that's composite 43.' The excitement of the 50-odd there was understandable if only because the next day's battle-lines were at last drawn.

After days of furtive uncertainty the diffuse opposition, loosely organised round the dockers, the car workers and the Scottish and London delegations, had measured their own strength against that of the union officials and finally united behind Motion 43 which called for a return to free collective bargaining on 1 August. That morning Jack Jones had made his last bid to unite the whole of the T&G behind the TUC position of honouring Phase Two, newly defined as not reopening negotiations until the full 12 months of existing agrements had run out. But over 80 of the 100 branches which had forwarded motions on pay had walked out of the meeting called to amalgamate their resolutions into that of the executive's. As one delegate said 'that's the biggest rebellion against the executive in all my years of coming to conference'.

At the outset of the pay debate, Motion 43 was receiving pointedly stormy ovations from a third of the audience, but gradually chairman Stan Pemberton (selecting randomly but evenly from the regions in which the delegates were arrayed) found himself calling up more and more speakers for Motion 43, permitted only three minutes before the red light on the rostrum bundled them out. The brevity of the speeches could never hope to match the drama of the occasion. Nevertheless, by lunch time the Left held sway, even if the rhetoric struggled home. A vote for the executive motion was a vote for the social contract; strong trade unions blazed a trial for the weak; Motion 43 was the only way to show loyalty to the Labour Party and protect the movement from the inevitable Tory landslide if the Government were not forced to think again. The most revealing moment came when the mover of the 1975 T&G social contract resolution came forward to admit that he had been mistaken. Through all this Jones sat imperviously turning over papers. He could only hope that the lunch break and the persuasion of his own oratory would turn the tide. When he came to speak the ground he had to cross was a mine-field and in defending the Government he more than once tripped. Indeed his perennial problem is that he has been unable to bring himself to attack the Government's record. Today his only concession was a call to defend the Government, warts and all, and a bizarre reference to Stonehouse. He begged them to fulfil the agreement to Phase Two and wondered aloud whether they thought he had deliberately followed a policy of lowering living standards. He was amazed at the viciousness of the attacks on the Government and claimed that Motion 43 would undoubtedly paralyse it. After the motion was lost he received a standing ovation, but there was no Phase Three and only a month left of Phase Two. For the first time during the debate Jones left the conference hall.

In 1969, at the last T&G conference held at Douglas, another general secretary was retiring. Frank Cousins made his final speech and warned 'that the union would resist any attempt by any government to limit the freedom of the union to act on behalf of its members by any extension or renewal of the Government's incomes policy'. The T&G's foremost objective was full employment. The irony is emphasised by the fact that today unemployment and inflation are both considerably higher. Just as Lenin wrote in 1917 'Everyone is in favour of peace in general including Kitchener, Joffre, Hindenberg and Nicholas the Bloody', so now no one is moving resolutions in favour of inflation. The question is who is going to be marked as responsible for it, and who is going to suffer most to eradicate it.

The T&G conference, which provided the largest and last of all the block votes for this September's TUC, had always looked like being decisive in what Geoffrey Howe has romantically described as 'the long slog against inflation'. The parameters of the negotiations between the Government and the TUC have now been settled. Once the AUEW and NUPE had voted, only the 1.9 million strong T&G could have salvaged restraint for a third year.

There had been enough danger signals for the Government during the elections for the general secretaryship. Moss Evans, the front runner, had to run hard to keep up with the rank-and-file animosity to Phase Three, while in late April Jones was unexpectedly overturned by the T&G delegates to the Scottish TUC. After his meetings with his executive, Jones's pronouncements showed that this body (sovereign between conferences and consisting of a blend of lay members) was split, not over the original definition of Phase Three – a fixed figure – but over whether to demand an immediate return to collective bargaining or to construct some priorities and qualifications about an ordered re-entry. But as one militant said: 'I have never understood what ordered but free collective bargaining means.' The executive was led to understand that the Government would throw them a lifeline in the form of some price subsidy or freeze. No such definite gesture came and there was more than one disgruntled executive member sitting on the benches along Douglas promenade. 'It's not the Labour Party that's to blame, it's them that's in government. I honestly can't tell what party they think they represent.'

The Government, in fact, have quietly stopped equating their survival with a fixed figure. Yet it is easy to forget how much this was a commonplace of cabinet speeches around the time of the Budget, and also how wildly complacent such an assumption was. For in fact Phase One had been accepted at the last T&G conference on the basis of no cuts in public expenditure and no increase in unemployment. Phase Two had only been accepted by the executive on a 26 to 13 vote. Facing the blast of conference democracy again and 53 separate motions, mainly condemning any form of pay restraint, Jones has had to tack with the wind and expand on the concept of an orderly return. Already included in last September's TUC listing of priorities were the recognition of differentials, a tightening of existing industry minimum wages and a further general increase in the minimum wage, consolidation of the supplements under the two phases into basic rates (which might add 3½ per cent to earnings alone), room for self-financing productivity agreements and [illegible] and developing

Roger Woddis

Ashes to Ashes

It was a summer evening,
  Old Gasper's work was done,
And he, to cure a hacking cough,
  Was smoking in the sun,
And feeling pleased that his cheroot
Contained tobacco substitute.

His little grandchild Wilhelmine
  Cried, 'Grandad, what is that?'
She'd stumbled on what seemed to be
  A dead and shrivelled bat.
'Tis some poor fellow's lung,' said he,
'Who fell in the great victory.'

'Oh, tell me all about the war,'
  She cried, and clapped her hands.
'There were three companies,' he said,
  'Each pushing rival brands,
Though none of them would dare admit
They made a packet out of it.

'And there were corpses everywhere,
  Despite the lower tar,
For many smokers, being hooked,
  Had gone a fag too far:
But things like that, you know, remain
After a marketing campaign.'

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emphasis on improvement in basic rates'. To appease his militants Jones had added specific mention of the 35-hour week and occupational pension increases. To make all of these priorities is arithmetical gobbledygook. So much so that the Left was sceptical that Jones would be able to adhere to it once involved in negotiations. As one said here 'to make everything a priority is also to make nothing a priority'.

Jack Jones has continued a process of democratising the T&G. Power to negotiate has been transferred to local plants and shop stewards, which before was the prerogative of union officials. So much so that Scanlon has dubbed the policy 'all power to the stewards'. Jones himself, on the eve of the conference, stressed its rank-and-file character. But although the platform never moves motions and faces sometimes bitter attacks from the floor, it does have immense privileges. On occasion it winds up a debate with a platform speech that takes as long as most of the floor speakers put together. The speech by deputy general secretary, Harry Urwin, was one example – though it was particularly memorable for the climatic prophecy that in five years we would have the healthiest economy in Western Europe. The original agenda also appears a hive of lively democracy, but eventually most motions on any one issue were composited together and rarely came into contention with one another. Debates on complex political issues descended into the platitudes of unanimity. The bluff announcement of the huge chairman, Stan Pemberton, 'Passed unanimously brothers and sisters' was the most repeated phrase of the conference.

The conference, including the executive, was quite unhesitant in passing unanimously in just one Tuesday session radical motions on investment, unemployment, import restrictions, equal pay legislation, transport policy, even though by implication as an aggregate they also condemn economic priorities upon which the Government is founded. Almost all these issues could only be pursued through political channels. The numbing consensus broke down when radical motions, if passed, had immediate direct implications for the T&G. And of course the classic example was pay: the crossroads where politics and economics meet in such unbrotherly conflict.

William Hall

Britain's Offshore Island

On 5 July each year the Isle of Man celebrates Tynwald Day. The Lieutenant-Governor, surrounded by the panoplies of colonialism, makes a Christ-like progress to Tynwald Hill, where, as one radio commentator once unfortunately put it, 'his path is strewn with sods from all over the island'. The legislation enacted by the Manx Parliament during the previous year, is then read out in English and Gaelic, and the Burghers of Mann have the theoretical right to object. The ceremony provides an attraction for tourists, and a reminder of the relative independence enjoyed by the (almost) thousand-year-old parliament. This year, though, there are demands for even greater freedom. Many want to end the main financial link with the United Kingdom, and turn the island into the Switzerland of the North. At the moment a select committee of Tynwald is seriously examining this possibility with the Home Office.

Of course, the Isle of Man already has a great deal of legislative independence. And if in this respect small is beautiful, then the island is well aware of its looks. 'We're a model for devolution,' said one member of the 24-strong House of Keys, adding wryly, 'we're the Athens of the Irish Sea'. There are no political parties of the style of Westminster, 'just 24 coalitions'. The Queen, as Lord of Man, is represented by Sir John Paul, whose career as governor has taken him to Africa and the Caribbean. Now, he presides over Tynwald and *Alice in Wonderland* cocktail parties at his official residence outside Douglas. Politically, it's all remarkably cosy: the chairman of the island's executive committee can usually be found among the pots and pans of his hardware store in the main street of Douglas. The responsibility of the United Kingdom Government can be defined quite simply: to ensure the good government of the island. But if in theory the powers of Tynwald are circumscribed, in practice 'good government' is left to the Manxmen themselves. This, enhanced by their seemingly innate conservatism, has led to conflict with Britain, especially over birching, or judicial corporal punishment as the islanders prefer to call it. Tynwald recently voted overwhelmingly to defy Westminster and the European Commission on Human Rights, both of which had been trying to get a total ban on birching. But in the heat of the row, it was forgotten that the Westminster Government does have the powers and the precedents for intervention. In a controversial case some years ago, the power of the transmitter of Manx Radio, the commercial station, was considerably reduced. And as the Attorney-General put it: 'If ever a serious conflict of interest developed, the UK would be able to legislate for the Isle of Man.'

However, there's growing support for changing that legislative relationship with the United Kingdom. The Manx National Party, Mac Vannin or Sons of Mann, was formed about 15 years ago to press for complete independence. 'The whole prosperity of the island is in direct proportion to its freedom,' said Doug Farraher, a party stalwart. He pointed to a strong revival of nationalism especially among the young who, he maintained, were increasingly aware of the island's identity as a small nation. Of course, beautiful thoughts don't always lead to political power. Mac Vannin has only one member in the House of Keys, and out of a total population of over 60,000, only about 3-400 speak Manx Gaelic. Of far more significance, is a general feeling of 'Manxness', a widespread desire to preserve the slow tempo of life in a small community that belongs more to the pre-war years than the 1970s. The problem is to couple preservation with prosperity. And the answer, it's increasingly felt, lies with greater independence.

Championing the cause are the financiers. The Isle of Man has, for nearly 20 years, set its own direct taxes. Personal incomes and company profits are taxed at just over 21p in the pound. The result for the island's economy was inevitable, though less spectacular than in the Channel Islands. Out went kippers, and in came ex-colonials and other assorted tax exiles, including, incidentally, many Rhodesians. The share of the island's revenue from banking and insurance rose from about 8 per cent to 25 in five years. One restriction to greater growth has however remained: the common purse. Under this arrangement, the Manx people pay standard UK customs and excise duties, betting and value added taxes. The money thus raised is pooled and then shared out on a *per capita* basis between the island and the rest of the United Kingdom.

The financiers on the island don't like the common purse, not least because it means that VAT returns are processed outside the island. Business is apparently deterred by the hint that 'revelations could be made' to the UK tax authorities. This argument won support from P.A. Management Consultants, who were asked to prepare a report on the island's economy. They too recommended ending the common purse regarding it as a hindrance to the growth of the island as an important European financial centre. They pointed to the fact that at present the Manx Government gets more money from taxation. than it can usefully spend. Ending the common purse link, could mean the abolition of VAT, and as one of the writers of the report joyously explained, 'the freedom to form the economy of the island to suit the people'.

However, the needs of finance are not necessarily the needs of all. An end to the common purse would involve setting up customs barriers between the island and the UK. Manx industry, which at the present accounts for one eighth of the island's revenue, would be cut off from its natural markets and would inevitably suffer. Another loser would be tourism, as it's widely believed that Llandudno and Ardrossan, for example, which between them handle some 30,000 visitors a year, would be closed to Manx traffic because neither has customs facilities. The Isle of Man therefore faces a choice, between enhancing its status as a tax haven, and the disadvantages that that would follow for industry and the rest of the community. In the end, the select committee of the House of Keys might well settle for a safer course: renegotiation of the terms of the common purse link. 'But whatever happens,' said one Manxman, 'remember the motto beneath the three legs of Man: whichever way you throw, it will stand.'

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Donald Gould

The Children of the Dead

As most newspaper readers will now know, Kim Casali, who created the 'Love Is . . .' cartoons, is pregnant by her husband, Roberto, who died of cancer 17 months ago. They had, it seems, planned on a family of four, but had only reached the half-way mark with two sons when Roberto's illness was diagnosed. So they arranged for some of Roberto's sperm to be deep-frozen, in which condition the spermatozoa remain in a state of suspended animation, and capable of fertilising an egg for several and possibly very many years. Mrs Casali has been successfully inseminated with a thawed-out sample of her late husband's bank seed.

This dramatic use by a well-known woman of one of the techniques of the new biology has not only forcefully reminded a wide public that the Brave New World is already here and beginning to influence our lives – it has also drawn attention to the fact that existing laws make no provision for circumstances which were unimagined when those laws were drafted.

When Mrs Casali's child is born will it be legitimate? Supposing Roberto Casali had been a hereditary peer, would a son conceived from his stored sperm succeed to the title? Or supposing a son conceived in the traditional manner were to be followed by another developed from sperm produced and stored prior to the pregnancy which resulted in the birth of his 'elder' brother – which, then, would be the first-born? Or supposing a child was born from the sperm of a dead husband after the mother had remarried – would the living 'father' have any legal responsibility for its keep and care?

These may appear as legalistic quibbles of no grave importance to society in view of the fact that such births have, so far, been exceedingly rare. But a real problem is already posed by the now increasingly frequent use of so-called AID, or artificial insemination by donor, in which a woman is made pregnant by sperm obtained from a normally unknown man. This is employed in the case of barren couples when it is the husband who is sterile, or sub-fertile, and the technique might also be used when the husband is known to be the carrier of a deleterious gene, so that any children fathered by him are at risk of being born with some congenital disease. The justification usually advanced for what, on the face of it, is a highly artificial and even repugnant procedure, is the 'natural' right of all married couples to have children, and it is argued that sharing a part of your own gene's make-up with your children is in no way an essential element of parenthood – witness the manner in which adopted sons and daughters become as solid a part of a family as any natural-born child.

Opponents of AID have claimed that it is folly to go to such extreme lengths to produce children in a world already gravely threatened by over-population, but this is to ignore the rights of the individual. Other means for relieving infertility are readily accepted, so why not AID? Moreover, so runs the counter-argument, the impact of AID on the birth-rate is insignificant, since the number of married couples will always be low compared to the total of 800,000 births occurring in, for example, the UK annually. Opponents also say that barren couples would do far better to adopt a child who might otherwise be left to institutional care, but the supply of such children nowadays falls far short of the demand, and many couples who would make excellent and loving parents do not measure up to the strict criteria rightly demanded before a request for adoption is approved.

The demand is there. In the US 30 per cent of all marriages are infertile, and more and more affected couples are seeking AID as the answer to their troubles. One British AID clinic has 400 women on its waiting list. Finally, an AID child will certainly be a wanted child. The law, however, remains harsh on children so conceived. Their status has been described as 'sub-legal'. They are regarded as illegitimate even when the husband of the mother concerned has gladly chosen this chance of 'fatherhood'. It is a crime for the couple concerned to register the husband's name as the father on the birth certificate. The donor of the sperm, if identified, might be held legally responsible for the child's upbringing. Attitudes vary throughout the world. In Italy, for example, AID is itself illegal, while in some states of the US, AID children are regarded as legitimate when the husband has consented to the procedure in writing. But, in general, the unfortunate issue of donor-inseminated women survive in a legal limbo.

There are further complications. There might be many occasions on which a couple would wish to pass off an AID child as their own. While this would be illegal under the present law the difficulties of detecting or proving such a 'fraud' would be immense. If artificial insemination by a husband's stored sperm becomes commoner, as it well might with the increasing practice of vasectomy, when sperm is sometimes stored against the risk of the death of existing children or a husband's remarriage, then the possibility of a mix-up at the sperm bank becomes greater (just as mothers at maternity hospitals are occasionally sent home with the wrong baby). And what happens when a childless woman, desperate for a family, employs AID without her husband's consent? Does this amount to adultery? On at least two occasions judges have held that it does, but this view was refuted in a Scottish case in 1958 on the grounds that no sexual intercourse had been involved.

The problem will increase in size, not only because of AID and the use of a husband's banked sperm, but also because of the inevitable development of other techniques for the procreation of the species other than by God's original plan. Attempts, so far unsuccessful, have been made to graft ovaries into sterile women. When the rejection problem has been solved, as it will be, this will become a relatively simple procedure which will put women so treated who then become pregnant in much the same position as that now occupied by the husbands of women made pregnant by AID. The fertilisation of human eggs in the test tube is easily done already. The next step – that of implanting such very early human embryos into the womb of the woman who produced the eggs, or, just as easily, a different woman – has been frequently tried, again without success so far, but that, too, is bound to be achieved before long. More remote, and perhaps less likely to be made the object of serious effort, but certainly within the realms of possibility, is the complete test-tube baby, reared from fertilised egg to full maturity on the laboratory bench.

Biological techniques have thus rendered the old laws of both God and man inadequate, and for the sake of countless children, some now alive, but most yet to be born, changes in both statutes and attitudes are urgent and essential. The issues involved are exceedingly complicated, and such changes will mean throwing overboard rules and assumptions and social customs which have evolved throughout the history of mankind, but the broad nature of the necessary revolution seems clear.

We must abandon the very concept of legitimacy, and the legal relationships between parent and child, and between both and the state, must be based upon a new status – that of the 'accepted' child. Old-fashioned moralists may not relish the idea: neither may families sustained by hereditary wealth and power: but it is not their interests which are at stake.

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London Diary

☐ The take-over of the Beaverbrook papers is the kind of event that shows why socialists can never be reconciled to capitalism. To my thinking, it is self-evidently wrong for the ownership and policy of a medium of information to be decided on purely commercial grounds. In the end, the crucial factor of the Trafalgar House bid was that it made the best provision for the future of the Beaverbrook family. Nobody would want them to be reduced to social security, of course. The *Express* 'empire', however grandiose the old Beaver made it appear, is actually a small business for the Trafalgar House group, with £400m. of assets in property, the construction industry, hotels and shipping. The *Financial Times* reckons that the new investment is about equal to the cost of one refrigerated fruit carrier, and Trafalgar House owns ten of them. Still, my first impression that Mr Victor Matthews, managing director of the group, is a Thomson-like figure – interested solely in profit and not in politics – doesn't survive a reading of the well-informed *FT* story. He has given £25,000 to the Tory Party and £10,000 to the pro-EEC campaign in the 1975 referendum. In a surprising echo of the great Max's views, he told the *FT* that it's important for the Beaverbrook papers to keep going and 'express their views which are sympathetic to those of the Conservative Party and of capitalism'. There was a time when some of us thought it important for the *Daily Herald* to keep going and express its views which were sympathetic to the Labour Party and socialism. But as we hadn't got £400m., it didn't matter what we thought.

☐ It's good news, on the whole, that there's to be a Royal Commission on the investigating powers of the police. True, the Prime Minister's statement didn't indicate that safeguarding the rights of the accused was the main idea; he warned darkly that the job of the police 'is being made unwarrantably difficult by the restraints of criminal procedure', thus repeating the gospel according to Mark. But the real reason for setting up the Commission was the highly disturbing Confait case, with all that it revealed about extorted confessions. The statement had to be made before the judicial report on that case comes out, and this is why the chairman and members of the Commission haven't yet been appointed. A chairman with a left-wing reputation might rouse the police to non-cooperation, and the Home Secretary's relations with them are bad enough already. Lord Boyle is being suggested as the right choice – honest and nobody's stooge, yet mollifying in manner and a card-carrying establishment man.

☐ I'm heartily relieved that Jane Wright, the British girl so unfortunately stranded on the coast of Somalia, has been acquitted of spying and released. To spend seven months in jail awaiting trial, constantly worried by thoughts of the prosecution's tactics and the possible unfairness of the court, is an experience that I wouldn't wish on anyone. Having said this, I find something displeasing in the impression – given notably by the permanently bad-tempered correspondent of BBC TV – that such things can only happen in African countries with Marxist governments. In Britain, the average time spent awaiting trial by a defendant in custody is three months, and periods of nine months are not unknown.

☐ Miss Wright, by the way, is a native (using that word correctly) of Swaziland and has never been to England before. This improbable country has a community of resolutely British people whose way of life recalls an untroubled past. You see the children going to school, in temperatures of over 100 degrees, wearing serge blazers, ties and caps. I once spent a day in Mbabane, the capital, which I recall as the most boring day in my life. A young man told me that, at the age of 21, he went to England for the first time to take a study course. He bought a car and was soon in trouble for failing to give way at a roundabout, never having encountered one before. A policeman halted him and asked: 'Where did you learn to drive?' He replied: 'Swaziland.' The policeman's face became stern. 'If you want to be funny,' he said, 'we can be funny too.'

☐ Madame Lupescu, famous as the mistress of King Carol of Rumania, has died at a ripe old age, after ultimately marrying and then surviving her lover. I read that she was bedridden for the last two years of her life, and I'm set musing on this odd word; you could say that she was bedridden pretty regularly right along. Far beyond her native country, she caught the popular fancy as a sort of Balkan Nell Gwynne – perhaps because she had red hair, perhaps because she was Jewish and therefore loathed by the local Establishment, perhaps because she flourished at a time when kings in general no longer had mistresses (the time of bowler-hatted George V and those bicycling, tennis-playing Scandinavian monarchs). She leaves behind a memory and a limerick:

'I was starving,' said Madame Lupescu,
'Till royalty came to the rescue,
Now it's diamonds and pearls,
So honestly, girls,
Is democracy better, I escu?'

☐ The Irish elections which produced a big upset, aren't entirely over yet and I'm rooting for two friends who are standing for the Senate and appealing for the votes of university graduates. Catherine McGuinness, a candidate for Dublin University, is a courageous champion of the right to divorce, family planning, and non-sectarian education. If she wins a lot of long-suffering Irish women will have an uncompromising spokesperson in the Senate. Liam de Paor, standing for a National University seat, is an outstanding historian and archaeologist; under his tutelage, I've spent some happy weeks unearthing the skeletons of monks on an island in Lough Derg. A man of questioning mind, merry humour and intense conviction he's the author of the Penguin *Divided Ulster* which is still the best book about Northern Ireland. The voting is by PR (six seats for each university) and by post, and I believe there are enough voters resident in Brtain to put Catherine and Liam in, so I hope they read the NS.

☐ War has broken out – *The Times* uses no less a word – over the question of the divinity of Jesus Christ. This matter is far too serious to be left to theologians. One of them, Professor John Hick, has told a press conference that he regards Jesus as 'one of the most wonderful and possibly the most wonderful human being who ever lived'. Something bothers me about this statement, apart from the grammar. If words are used strictly, must there not be a supernatural quality in anyone who is 'wonderful'? But the crucial point is this: if Jesus was no more than a great prophet and an outstanding man, then Christians believe the same as Moslems. On top of the blurred frontiers between the Catholic and Protestant churches, already a loss to the variety of the world, we could be moving toward an assimilation of Christianity to Islam. And what would that mean? No sex equality, no figurative painting, no wine, no pork in cider or gammon and pineapple. How can any NS reader be indifferent?

☐ My dentist has been telling me that he sometimes makes home visits to old people, including the occupants of grace-and-favour apartments at Hampton Court. One old lady informed him that she had travelled all over the world, so he asked her where she had enjoyed herself most. 'Oh, in Peking,' she replied. 'But of course, that was before the Chinese got it.'

Mervyn Jones

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Mr Matthews strongly denied that the takeover was an asset stripping operation. He was firmly committed to the survival of the *Standard* and the *Daily* and *Sunday Express*. 'By and large, the Editors will have complete freedom as long as they agree with the policy I have laid down,' he said. – *Financial Times* (John Torode)

☐ Of the 5,262 trains which ran every day throughout March on British Rail's Southern Region, 8.25 per cent arrived on time. Issuing punctuality figures for the first time, British Rail say the times were achieved despite some major and many minor disruptions. – *Surrey Advertiser* (J. W. Pestell)

☐ The Department of Education and Science has sent a circular to every education authority in the country instructing them how to make holes in walls so that they can hang pictures. 'A wall,' the circular adds, 'is a rectangle with horizontal and vertical sides.' – *Guardian* (Ros Goldfarb)

☐ Families were invited by Essex Water Co yesterday to tour the sewage works at Chigwell as a Silver Jubilee treat. – *Sunday People* (E. G. Breeze)

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David Leitch

Death of an Expatriate

In working-class Paris, when there was still some left, Anglo-Saxon aliens were always taken for Americans. This was less a matter of ignorance than commercial principle, the reflex which nowadays leads London cabbies to insist out-of-work Moroccan dish-washers haunting Oxford Street Wimpeys are oil sheikhs from the Gulf. If you have to stretch your mind to accommodate a foreigner the notion that he might be stinking rich provides consolation. This principle has made me periodically an American in Paris. And, by extension, a buddie of 'the other American' who knocked around mysteriously somewhere in the *quartier*.

'Your friend was here again last night', a barman would often announce. 'Which friend?' 'The American writer, *bien entendu*. When it comes to drink you Yankees really ring the bell. With him – as you know – it's always a little scotch, then a little beer, then a little scotch . . .'

Useless to deny all knowledge of this bibulous, literary ghost, to explain that our paths, often it seemed parallel, had never in fact collided. Sometimes I would feign acquaintance with this quiet and indeed invisible American's drinking habits – to please, or in the hope of more specific information. These researches bore no fruit. All I learned, again and again, was that this man kept eccentric hours, drank like a goldfish, and was a writer.

With other friends, more corporeal ones, the subject became a matter of speculation, on and off. It was clear this ghost did not in reality inhabit the quarter, or at any rate only spasmodically. He was more like a clandestine visitor, one who preferred the very late evening and the very early morning. Our tentative conclusion was characteristically French – adultery. More specifically, that his girl-friend had a husband who was a night-worker.

This explanation covered, partly at least, his weakness for a particular bar on the Rue Pont aux Choux, which is more of a glorified kitchen selling coal, logs and 'Butagaz' cylinders as well as the hard stuff. Its appeal on a literary level was obvious. In error or by inadvertence it had retained all the characteristics of those Contrescarpe establishments of the 1920s described by Hemingway and others. Originally we thought he must have been frequenting it in search of *démodé* colour. Then someone pointed out its practicality if you accepted the adultery theory. Since it opened at dawn, or shortly after, our writing American would slip in to avoid the returning night-worker and take on a bracing *calvados* for the road to wherever he really lived.

There the matter rested, forgotten until recently when I dropped into the place to dodge a rain-storm. 'So your friend has gone home finally', came the greeting. 'Which friend?' 'The American writer naturally. He came here to feast his departure, you know how he is. A little beer, a little scotch . . .'

A sign of the times clear enough. In due course our American's place will no doubt be filled by a Japanese restaurateur or an Arab photographer or whatever goes with the new *zeitgeist*. When I reported the latest – and last – twist in the story the consensus was that our vanished chum had been neither American, nor a writer, though the drinking aspect was well documented enough to be taken on trust. 'I suppose he couldn't have been James Jones', someone suggested. 'He's gone, hasn't he?'

It was not Jones territory, this part of the Marais being too far from the Ile St Louis for his taste, but certainly 'the *Eternity* author' as everyone knew had finally gone back to the US. When the grim news that he had gone for good followed, dying not in Paris like every good American, but in New York, it felt like, as they say, the end of an epoch. And of a very specific expatriate myth which Jones had almost single-handed managed to preserve for something more than its strictly natural life.

He first came in 1958 on a visit – newly married, fairly newly rich, and already doomed to be known as author of *From Here to Eternity*, his novel about the edge of war, rather than war itself, as was usually assumed, which had sold a few million copies and filled a few more million cinema seats. He was in his middle thirties but looked younger, part Welsh, part redskin, but somehow all American, with a voice that proclaimed the Middle West and a passport which marked his birthplace as Illinois. His face was almost astonishingly open then, with a yearning boyish look only lightly disguised by bumps around the nose and wing-shaped eyebrows.

He liked snakeskin jackets, open shirts and sneakers which gave the impression (quite rightly) that he was in training for something. He liked to gamble of course and when his wife found she was pregnant they tossed a coin to see whether they should prolong their stay in Paris. It lasted getting on for 17 years.

He had met Gloria in Hollywood where, to her profound irritation in later years, she had been a stand-in for Marilyn Monroe. The shy and almost rueful element in his (sober) personality was complemented by her magisterial sense of attack and superlatively meagre threshold of boredom. 'Shut up you bum and listen to the master,' she remarked to an alarmed French intellectual who had been exploiting James's delicate sense of politeness. An English writer of the avant-garde turned silent, for the first time probably, when she asked him the length of a dinner-table: 'We've got a million dollars, what have you got?'

Her capacity for sending herself and others up usually turned on themes, sex and money notably, which along with violent physical activity stalked the pages of the master's *oeuvre*. The first time I met him, in George Whitman's bookshop in Place St Julien-le-Pauvre, there was a matter of a white Mercedes and a post-Christmas party accident in the air, and beneath the springy athleticism it was not hard to detect a guarded and fleetingly rueful expression. This look, often to appear again over the Paris years, was brought on by references to his first success – *Eternity* as it was called in abbreviated form. For the problem was only too clear. The money kept on rolling, the master kept on writing with great pain and exemplary stamina, but as far as the critics were concerned the only place he could go was down.

Some Came Running was condemned for being too prolix and not about war, *The Pistol* for being terse and warlike. Since he had committed the unforgiveable sin of being read by millions it was naturally assumed his hide was elephant-thick. He was fair game and while Mailer, with whom the ignorant were always confusing him, expanded like a berserk firework Jones seemed a prisoner of his own literary and human style. He had taken what he had as far as it would go.

By the time he published *The Merry Month of May*, his novel of the Paris revolt, it was easy to see why he chose a narrator, Jonathan James Hartley, who thought of himself as a failed novelist and poet. All the precious boyish accoutrements Jones surrounded himself with – the bar made from a Louis XIII pulpit, all those signed menus and first editions, the guns and knives and axes – were here described with love and precision. But attached to another character, the baddie, who had been destroyed by two much expatriated success.

At the time (1971) it looked a poor piece of work. Now, with surprising power, it gives a sense of time and place, and of a certain kind of masculine or perhaps *macho* sensibility, which historians will very likely prize. 'I sit here at my window on the river in the crepuscular light of that peculiar grey-blue Paris twilight which is so beautiful and like no other light anywhere on earth, and I wonder, what now?'

A return home, leaving behind a city which, like many of his compatriots who knew it less well, he concluded was too good for the French. The sun, as we know, also sets, and he probably thought he had stayed too long. But, like his Marais ghost, he probably timed it just about right.

This America

☐ The Missouri Supreme Court ruled today that the removal of a bullet from the buttocks of a suspected murderer for evidence used to convict him was unconstitutional search and seizure.

The defendant, Tommie Warren Overstreet of St Louis, won a new trial for the 3 January, 1974 robbery-murder of Louis Adelstein, co-owner of a St Louis iron works plant. He received a life sentence for his original conviction. – *New York Times* (Derek Brandon)

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Do Bring Your Gong Along

We may be fairly remote down here in Devon and there are those who picture us as being permanently knee-deep in clotted cream and bemused with heady cider, but in point of fact we keep a sharp eye on things and my friends and I, alert as ever, were greatly astonished to read in the paper that the Agricultural, Fisheries and Food section of Her Majesty's Government, represented by Mr Edward Bishop, with Mrs Bishop loyally at his side, had thrown a gladsome 'reception' at a Nottingham hotel. And on whose behalf do you suppose they trundled all the way up to the Dukeries? Who were there to sip the medium Cyprus and crowd hungrily to the tasty cold buffet? Why, your and my top-favourite group of fun people – none other than the International Institute of Sugar Beet Researchers. How the researchers found time to break off from their arduous beet research duties, down tools in Toulouse, Trieste and the vinegar vats of Tarragona and hook it hastily for that prime beet centre, Nottingham, *qui sait* and *quien sabe*? At this gathering (paid for, as I'm always reminding you, by us), were suitable toasts drunk ('Gentlemen, I give you the humble beet')? Were speeches made, urging the researchers on to ever more violent researching?

Sugar beet isn't perhaps, as a springboard for eloquence, the absolutely ideal subject but how odd it is that certain voices can make the most arid material pleasing. Sir John Gielgud could recite, to non-cricket-lovers, page after page of Wisden's past excitements ('Hammond, run out, 84. Hobbs, hit wicket, 197') and make them fully pleasurable. During the war, the frightening edge was taken off the direst of disasters by, on the radio, the calm and comforting tones of Stuart Hibberd. But odder still is the fact that these two sterling performers, both famous too for their modesty, would, like most of the rest of us, shrink with horror and dismay at the sound of their own recorded voices. We don't, the informed tell me, hear our own voices through our own ears. Though it seems probable that a whisper or two comes floating round the corner, so to speak, the main volume of sound makes its way, it appears, by a more direct route and along some solid bone conductor inside one's nut and reaches the ear-drums that way. We do not, fortunately, flinch all the time as we speak, for we are clearly hearing something different and, to us, tolerable. It is only on listening to our recorded voices that we get the true and horrible vocal impact.

I was first forced to listen to my own affected and pretentious and namby-pamby tones in the mid-1930s. I had started to make gramophone records for Columbia. The records were intended to be funny and, as in those days Columbia's recording artistes, as we were tastefully called, had each to be inserted into a conveniently descriptive slot for the catalogue, my little wax offerings were issued to the public labelled Humorous Monologues, both to me extremely off-putting words. I had to 'pass' each record (I made one a year) and therefore had to listen, horrified, to them as they came out. I have never risked the experience since.

But being, in the 1930s, youngish and keen and anxious to improve, I buried my nose in various books on elocution and found myself at once in a fascinating world of physical technicalities. The writers were for ever encouraging me to open my mouth and, peering inside it with the aid of a glass, to feast my eyes on my hard and soft palates, my tongue, my glottis, my laryngeal areas, and, somewhere at the back, my 'little grape-shaped pendant', or uvula. Moving a bit further afield and in a southerly direction, there was my larynx going excitingly up and down, and my Adam's apple which, nowadays snugly enfolded, has not been on view since about 1948. Great stress seemed to be laid on the desirability of a musical laugh and the texts were thick with 'Ha! Ha! Ha!' on a rising or descending scale, or a hearty 'Ho! Ho! Ho!' right there on the very same note. Speaking was referred to as 'phonation' and the pages bristled with lively vocal exercises ('Hurrah! Hurry! Harry! Harriet!').

I have recently dealt, in an egocentric manner, both with my phobias and my physique and now, in what I promise to be a final attempt at improving my image, I'm into elocution again, greatly helped by Malcolm Morrison's handy little *Clear Speech* (Pitman: £1.50) whose worthy aim is to get us all articulating crisply enough to avoid 'a time-wasting flurry of pardon me's'. We are also invited to emulate, in stunning clarity, various speakers and among them a BR station announcer called Angela Peberdy who must, alas, announce at a station that I have not yet had the pleasure of visiting (there used to be a lovely lady at Taunton who welcomed the train's arrival with a glad cry of 'Torn-tun, Torn-tun'). In addition to the voice beautiful, Mr Morrison is insistent on the vital importance of Posture. Before so much as a single syllable is uttered, get that posture right. It's far from easy. Follow closely. Don't slump. Don't push the torso forwards and upwards. 'The pelvis should be directly above the instep. The torso should be directly above the pelvis. The shoulders should be directly above the pelvis and in line with the breast bone at the front.'

But it is in the choice of piquant phrases for exercising the vocal cords that Mr Morrison's true forte lies (indeed, it is to him that we owe 'Bring your gong along'). At first, of course, we have to work through valuable but meaningless sounds such as OOTHOO, AWSTHS and HAW HAW HAW (I thought it wouldn't be long before we got to laughter). But soon after that a jolly note is struck with 'many merry milkmaids' and 'nineteen noisy gnomes', and what could be more dramatic than 'The snake stung swiftly', 'the blood flowed slowly' and 'the flames leapt into the loft'? Occasionally there is a puzzlement. What can 'filthy gold silk' be, and why is it filthy? There are, too, a few improbabilities: 'Take a tube to Tewkesbury' might get foreigners into serious difficulties at Piccadilly underground ('We are requiring two day returns to Tewkesbury'). And then suddenly all is jollity again with 'Twenty tiny tap dancers' and 'Two dukes tooting tunes on little flutes'. Nor are politics neglected. 'The assassination of the assistant secretary surprised several people', as well it might. But here too is a political puzzlement. 'Harold fell and yelled for help.' Well, I suppose that, in a sense, he certainly fell, but I've heard no yells for help, yet.

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Letters to the Editor

One Man, One Vote, One Party

Sir, Anthony Howard's well-founded criticisms of the proposed Regional List System (NS 1 July) miss a crucial point: Labour candidates, divided on the EEC, would tend to campaign against one another and hence to destroy the party. However, a simple rejection of Michael Steed's clever ploy in favour of first-past-the-post can bring down the Government and enable the Liberals to put a plausible, if erroneous, case to the electorate. Proportional representation and constituency transferable voting are designed to place power virtually permanently in the custody of centre party wheeler-dealers and should be opposed absolutely on principle. Yet our present system is open to some valid criticism: hence it is worth seeing if an acceptable basis for agreement exists.

The main objection to our present system is that electors have to guess the outcome in order to vote tactically for a second preference outcome: the same is true with the devil-take-the-hindmost system favoured by the Liberals. There is a simple solution already practised in France – a double ballot. Each party then receives its true first preference vote first time: before they come to make their final decision electors know the balance of support both nationally and locally and fringe candidates can withdraw. Clearcut results are more likely as minor party votes are squeezed second time around. The likelihood of a clear outcome could be increased in general elections by allowing the party with the most votes say 25 extra seats to relieve cabinet ministers of constituency duties and allowing the main opposition party an equal number of speaking but not voting seats. Such a system would handicap the Nationalist parties whereas Liberal ideas would bring about the break-up of the United Kingdom into quarrelling, if not warring, states. In a divided community, such as Northern Ireland, it is worth noting that competition between rival teams would encourage bids for minority support through inclusion of their representatives in executive teams. These reforms would be fair between parties and increase the electorate's power of decision. The Liberals would have difficulty resisting.

HILTON ABRAMS

The Old Hall
Marple, Stockport

Sir, The Left-wing of the Labour Party needs to decide which of these two possible patterns it would prefer to see in the next Parliament:

(1) Conservatives 360; Labour 210; Liberals 10; Miscellaneous Nationalists 55

or,

(2) Conservatives 270; Labour 290; Liberals 45; Miscellaneous Nationalists 30.

If it favours the former, then little action is needed – but to secure the latter will call for heart-searching and hard-headedness, as well as willingness to see old shibboleths (such as revulsion from any form of election pact) as less than sacrosanct.

HARVEY R. COLE

9 Clifton Road
Winchester

Sir, Mr Peter Johnston (Letters 1 July) carries the argument that the Labour Party is 'a coalition' far beyond both reality and reason. He writes as if the *Tribuneites* are a separate and independent party like the Liberals. But they are not. They are Labour MPs elected to support a Labour Government. Each of them, as did every other Labour MP, signed an undertaking to conform with the standing orders of the Parliamentry Labour Party as a condition of adoption as a candidate. If any of them had stood as *Tribuneites* independent of the Labour Party, their election would have been, to say the least, somewhat unlikely. It follows from this that any *Tribuneite* Labour MP who votes against the Labour Government is betraying his trust and that the *Tribuneite* section of Parliamentary Labour Party has neither the authority nor the moral right to start 'negotiating' with the Government as to the terms on which they will support it.

When their attitude comes down to the present attempts to prevent the British people from having a direct democratic voice in the European Parliament or, if they cannot ensure this, to support an electoral system which will ensure complete Tory domination of that voice, the utterly cynical and reactionary nature of their attitude calls only for the scathing contempt which it deserves.

J. STEWART COOK

37 Frances Road
Windsor

Showing the Blue Flag

Sir, Patrick Wintour, who interviewed me about the work of Aims for Freedom and Enterprise, seemed at first acquaintance a nice man. In fact, amiability keeps on squeezing through his article (NS 1 July). But, alas, he displays in it two of the vices of the intellectual Left. The first is an intellectual snobbery towards the public and a sense of shock at those who sometimes speak in words that can be understood. The second vice, which conflicts with the first, is a monopolistic approach to communication to the general public: apparently it is okay for the myriad organisations from the Left to speak in varying terms, but rather *outré* if the non-Left attempt it.

And so, the fact that Aims gives awards to Ralph Harris and Keith Joseph and publish Tibor Szamuely is our way of compensating for our intellectual inferiority. In fact, over the years we have published authors including Alan Walters, Paul Einzig, Antony Flew, Professor H. B. Acton, Sir John Foster, Q.C., Northcote Parkinson, D. R. Denman, George Steiner, T. E. Utley, Norman Macrae, and many others. We warned against the movement to the corporate state about ten years before the ex-editor of the NEW STATESMAN encouragingly took a similar line. But we do also see the importance of going direct to the public and opinion surveys show us that our work does have tangible results.

On a less important point, Patrick Wintour writes that Aims' approach to our work on building problems – by which he presumably means direct labour – is 'rigidly practical'. But he then goes on to say that Aims gets 'much of its funds' from the construction industry. I hate to look a gift industry in the mouth – but just to put the record straight we get approximately 16 per cent of our annual income from the construction industry.

MICHAEL IVENS
Director

Aims for Freedom and Enterprise
5 Plough Place
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The Language of Separatism

Sir, 'We had to fire Jeanne from the shop because she couldn't speak English.' That was just one remark by an English-speaking businessman which I heard while I was in Montreal. Nobody, of course, would dream of sacking a shop assistant in Toronto, or anywhere else in English-speaking Canada, for speaking no French. The reason why Jeanne got the sack is that most English-speaking people born in Montreal or who have lived there for decades, can speak no French; and, indeed, many boasted to me of the fact; though most of the people of the town, and almost all in the province around, speak French. I fail to understand how the Roman Catholic Church is to blame either for the ignorance or the arrogance of the Montreal colonist 'elite', though Stephanie Williams, seems to think it is (NS 1 July). The triumph for this arrogant minority of English-speaking businessmen was the flag which they imposed on the city of Montreal, the second largest French-speaking town in the world. It is a Cross of St George! In the quarters are an English rose, a Scottish thistle, and, in the lower quarters where it is felt that those symbolised belong, an Irish shamrock and a French Canadian lily.

That the Levesque government wish to put an end to these idiocies, and insist that, if English-speaking businessmen want to make money out of the French-speaking populations of Quebec, they can learn the local language and respect the local culture, seems reasonable to me. There is not much doubt that those who want to set up business and employ people in, say, Manchester have to learn English and use it in their transactions; and so they would have to in the English-speaking parts of Canada.

To read your correspondent's description of Levesque's very moderate Language Bill as 'chauvinistic' astonished me. To believe that if it is chauvinistic, one has to share the attitudes of the Hitler of 1938-39, who thought it scandalous that any German had to live under Czech or Polish rule but quite desirable that Czechs and Poles live under German rule. It is this typical attitude of the English-speaking minority in Quebec which led to the growth of Parti Québecois (whose initial support was overwhelmingly from Montreal). It is high time for a change of heart, or for the repudiation of the English-speakers in Quebec by the rest of Canada, before their ridiculous behaviour finally tears the country in two.

IFAN LLOYD

73a Boileau Road
London W5

Death of a Free School

Sir, Is it really too late for the London Education Authority to think again about their decision to close down the White Lion Free School in Islington? Peter Wilby's article (NS 1 July) suggests at any rate that Islington is to be congratulated that for five years such a school has managed to survive all the pressures that a narrow minded bureaucracy can bring to bear.

Does anyone remember just such a school that was carried on in Manchester in the Twenties and Thirties? It was called Prestolee, and for more than 30 years Teddy O'Neil, the headmaster, battled for its existence and showed how such a system could work. The school was unique in that it was under the control of the Lancashire Education Authority in a small industrial village for the children of working class parents (*not* delinquents). The children regularly passed the sharp scrutiny of HM Inspectors of Schools, and to their great credit the Lancashire Education Authority gave it support.

The principles described by Peter Wilby were successfully put into practice by O'Neil in the teeth of opposition from school governors, teachers and most of all from some of the owners of the mills in the village who dis-

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approved strongly, for instance, of the children learning to build and make gardens in a school playground.

In spite of dismal prophecies the children at Prestolee were found to be competent enough to pass the 11-plus exams when these came into force. But Prestolee was killed stone dead of course when O'Neil retired (the school gardens even were concreted over). That was 25 years ago. But there will be other Prestolees and the White Lion School isn't dead yet. Or is it?

DOROTHY LIVINGS

Ashley Cottage
Pen-y-can
The Narth, Monmouth

The Effects of Napalm

Sir, I have read the article 'Crimes Against Humanity' by Robin Cook (NS 10 June) and I thought you would be interested to hear of my own experiences, suffered as a result of a napalm bomb attack. I am a Kurd from Sulaimani, in Iraq, and I joined the Kurdish Revolution when I was 15 to fight for the independence of my people. At the age of 17, on 23 October 1974, I among other Kurdish soldiers was the victim of a napalm bomb attack at the hands of the Iraqi army, when fighting in the district of Rawandozz, in Kurdistan. After the attack I was taken to a military field hospital, and later to a hospital in Teheran, since when I have had 25 operations, both in Holland and the UK. I suffer continual pain in my left leg and periodic pain in the other parts of my body that were injured.

The entire left hand side of my body, including my face, was severely burnt in the attack. I have no left ear. The muscles in my left arm were damaged, thus limiting the range of movement in that arm. Burns from the napalm have destroyed the thumb and fingers on my left hand and therefore the hand is useless. After five operations, the fingers on my right hand have been separated and straightened out and use of that hand has been restored. I am at present in hospital undergoing further operations, the success of which is not certain, but I do know that I shall be scarred for life on those parts of my body that were burnt by the napalm.

As a refugee with no status in any country, unable to work and therefore support myself, I sometimes wonder whether it would have been more humane to have been killed outright by a conventional bomb than to suffer the psychological shock and continuous pain that accompanies injury through an incendiary weapon. For these reasons I would never use napalm, or any other incendiary weapon, even against my worst enemy, and I appeal to anyone in a position of influence to continue to fight against the use of such weapons and, hopefully, enable them to be added to the list of weapons outlawed by international humanitarian law.

ZAHIR SAID

University College Hospital
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London WC1

Chief Rabbi and the Queen

Sir, May I refer to a quotation from the Chief Rabbi which appeared in your feature 'This England' (NS 24 June)? The quotation conveys quite the wrong impression of the Chief Rabbi's speech. I quote the two relevant paragraphs:

> I believe we have never had more cause to thank Providence and to acclaim our crowned Head than on this Royal occasion. Let me explain. Perhaps the question most frequently asked and discussed, especially in our media, in connection with the Silver Jubilee is, what tangible difference has the Queen made to our lives? The answer is usually 'none' or 'very little'.
>
> Precisely therein lies the most momentous contribution our Queen has made to the quality and security of our lives. In a world of tempestuous change and unprecedented volatility, our Queen and her throne have conferred upon our country a measure of stability not found anywhere else. But for her wise rule and steadfast defence of changeless values, our lives today might be very different indeed.

MOSHE DAVIS
Executive Director
Office of the Chief Rabbi
Adler House
London WC1

Come Off It

Sir, Crucifer's quotation from *Canary Girls and Stockpots* (NS 17 June) annoys me, because it is not written to expose the conditions of the times but to give him the opportunity of a side-slap at the Post Office. What is the use of quoting figures like halfpenny post unless wages and conditions of the time are also mentioned? Servants at £10 per year, soldiers at a 1/- per day? A couple of years after 1914 I also got a 1/- a day. Today (if *Whitaker* is correct) I should receive £4.68, a multiplier of 93. So a halfpenny stamp should today cost nearly 20 pence!

In those days tobacco was 3 pence per ounce, Woodbines five a penny and beer 1½d and 2d a pint. So what? The answer is we are living in 1977 not 1914 and comparisons such as mentioned, (which always seem to proliferate during the life of a Labour government) serve no useful purpose other than to perpetuate the dream of returning to the days when 'the working-man knew his place', if that is a useful purpose. That the NS should pander to such ideas surprises me.

H. G. BODY

Waterloo
Morvah
Pendeen, Penzance

Broadly Speaking

Sir, I don't mind being called names. In fact, it has happened quite a lot. But I do get a little tired of being labelled by people who I have never met – and who have never met me. According to Sue Slipman (NS 1 July) I was one of the 'old right guard' of the NUS. Well, at that time in 1968 I was 24, had let my membership of the Labour Party lapse years previously owing to its spineless licking of the boots of American foreign policy. Guard of what? Which values? Ms Slipman can't know. She doesn't know me.

If she had asked I could have told her that, like her, I was concerned with creativity, with individually – even with that elusive sprite, the release of energy. I could also have told her that I was opposed to some things. Like sternly disciplined, ideologically narrow and personally vindictive political groupings active at that time. One of them she may be surprised to hear, was the Communist Party, actively organised by a full-time Party official.

Indeed, it was precisely because I was opposed to that ideological and undemocratic straitjacket which she now deplores, that I opposed her ideological predecessors and their allies. Because, unlike many of them – and her – I did not possess an arrogant, patronising view of my fellow students. As I had not been a full-time union or NUS official I knew many who were not active in the confining political terms of the NUS. But active many were. They cared about education and did something about it. As they have done for years. They got involved with schools, with community groups, with the disadvantaged – in their own free time, and with no breast-beating or self-flagellation. They simply did things. And in many ways that difference in outlook was the battle that was lost in 1968, the battle between running an operational as opposed to a declaratory union. It is for students to judge the victory of the latter.

LEON KREITZMAN
Vice-President, NUS (1966-68)
10 Albert Mansions
London SW11

Sir, Isn't it a bit much for an English graduate and trained teacher – even if she is the president of the National Union of Students – to commit such howlers as 'homogenous', homogenity', 'epigramatic', 'straight-jacketing', 'equally paramount', and 'eremitical 'power struggles' (University Forum 1 July)?

ARTHUR FREEMAN
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In All Their Glory

Sir, Ian Hamilton, on the match between Virginia Wade and Rosemary Casals (NS 1 July) refers to 'an unusually offensive parade of sulking, head-banded narcissists' (women tennis players). I know I'm not alone in finding Virginia Wade and other women tennis players of this year's Wimbledon especially attractive exactly because they no longer defer to the judgment of Mr Hamilton and other men about whether they should sulk or not, wear headbands, etc. But Mr Hamilton is not alone, either, in trying to keep alive the myth that the only natural, feminine way for a woman to play tennis is in a charming pansy style, deferring always to the better judgment of men in these matters.

We readers this year have seen an unusually offensive parade of shrill, embattled men trying to undermine women whenever they are at their most glorious.

M. D. OESTREICHER
34 Holmead Road
London SW6

Bizarre Bedfellows

Sir, Surely, Arthur Marshall cannot have missed the bizarrest of his bedfellows, being of course, that article in your 1 April number: 'Oh I say Thanks Awfully . . .' juxtaposed with an advert for the Sale of the Century. A new idea for anti-jubilecants on your staff . . .?

D. S. PEARCE
Brocas Croft
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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Clive James

Nabokov's Grand Folly

Eugene Onegin: A Novel in Verse by ALEKSANDR PUSHKIN translated from the Russian, with a commentary, by Vladimir Nabokov *Routledge* £30
Nabokov Translated by JANE GRAYSON *Oxford* £9.50

In the week of his death, it is instructive to remember that Nabokov's translation of *Eugene Onegin* was a project dear to his heart. Expert opinions of the recent second edition were not much more favourable than they were for the first, mainly because the translator had not done enough to eliminate what were earlier judged to be eccentricities of diction, while the commentary obstinately remained unmodified in all its idiosyncracies. There is undoubtedly a sense in which the whole enterprise is a great folly. But even those Russianists who have been most inclined to question Nabokov's success in transmitting the essence of Pushkin are usually willing to concede that this cranky monument of scholarship might at least come in useful to the beginner.

As it happens, I am in a position to test this idea, being very much a beginner with Pushkin, and therefore in dire need of a good crib. Pushkin is never wilfully complicated, but his simplicities can be highly compressed. There are times when even an advanced student of the language is certain to need help, while the stumbler is likely to bog down completely. I should say at the outset that in several respects Nabokov's Folly serves the turn. It is a work to be valued, although even the tyro is bound to find it silly as well as brilliant.

The ideal crib, of course, should merely be the servant of the original. But Nabokov was incapable of being anybody's servant, even his admired Pushkin's: in paying homage to his giant predecessor he did his best to keep his own ego in the background, but ever and anon it shouldered its way forward. Nabokov's theory of translation was based on 'humble fidelity' to the original, yet try as he might to give us nothing more pretentious than a word-for-word equivalent, he still managed to make Pushkin sound like Nabokov.

Nor is the commentary free from quirks. In fact it is largely made up of them. He has set out to be more scholarly than the scholars; it is doubtful whether anybody else inside or outside Russia knows as much about Pushkin; but you don't have to know a thousandth as much to realise that Nabokov is no more *reasonable* on this subject than anybody else. I switch to the present tense unfitting to talk about the author of so call... commentary as if he were not alive – he is at you all the time, continually asserting himself against those hordes of translators and academics who have either misunderstood Pushkin or, worse, understood him too quickly. But there are limits to how far insight can go without common sense to back it up.

Following Gautier, Nabokov thought the ideal translation should be an interlinear lexicon. The theory is ably expounded by Jane Grayson in her painstaking *Nabokov Translated*, a book which has the additional merit of showing that in the case of his own writings the master is tactfully flexible about putting it into practice. But where *Eugene Onegin* is concerned there can apparently be no departure from dogma. Throughout the commentary, Nabokov is forever telling you the words he *might* have used in the translation if he had set out to do anything so misguided as convey the spirit of the original. But no, he has resisted against overwhelming odds: awkwardness is not only not to be avoided, it is positively to be sought, if that happens to be the price of exactitude.

There is something in this view, although not as much as Nabokov thinks. It is true that a translator who sets out to render the 'spirit' is likely to traduce the original author. But Nabokov's paroxysms of accuracy traduce Pushkin's spirit as thoroughly as any academic poetaster has ever done. He makes Pushkin sound like a Scrabble buff. Certainly there are words in Pushkin that don't now mean what they once did, and even words that would have seemed odd at the time. Hence the modern foreign reader's need for more help than an ordinary dictionary can provide. But none of this means that Pushkin wants to be puzzling. On the contrary, what impresses you about him is his unforced naturalness of tone. The sad thing about Nabokov's translation is that he is not really capable of echoing such a quality. Instead, he dithers pedantically in the very area of verbal sophistication which for Pushkin was never more than a playground.

It is well known that Nabokov keeps saying 'mollitude' where either 'bliss' or 'langour' would have done. Sometimes you can make a better case for 'bliss' than for 'langour' and sometimes vice versa, but what nobody normal can doubt is that there is no case to be made for 'mollitude'. Yet after all the uproar which greeted his use of 'mollitude' in the first edition, here it still is in the second, having the effect, every time it appears, of wrinkling the reader's brow. The idea behind using 'mollitude' is evidently to convey something of the Russian word's Frenchified feeling. But 'mollitude' does nothing to make the English reader ... such influence. It just makes him think ... the weight of the OED.

At least he can find 'morgue' in the *Concise*, defined in roughly the same way Nabokov uses it, to mean 'arrogance'. But arrogance is scarcely the first thing an English reader thinks of when he sees the word 'morgue'. He thinks of dead bodies on zinc tables. Why not just use 'arrogance'? The answer, I'm afraid, is that Nabokov wants to indulge himself in the euphuism of 'I marvelled at their modeish morgue'. (In the introduction we learn of Onegin and Lensky that 'both are blasé, bizarre beaux'. Always the virtuoso of his adopted tongue, Nabokov never quite grasped that half the trick of composing in English is *not* to write alliteratively.)

Why use 'trinkleter' where 'haberdasher' would have done? Why 'larmoyant' for 'lachrymose'? What does 'debile' give you that 'feeble' doesn't? Why 'cornuto' for 'cuckold'? Certainly the Russian word has horns which the Italian word reproduces. Unfortunately the Italian word is not in English. Nor is Nabokov correct in supposing that there is any word in *Inferno* III, 9, which might mean 'forever'. He quibbles so relentlessly himself that you would have to be a saint not to quibble back.

On this showing, Nabokov has no call to despise those less informed translators who have had the temerity to cast their versions in rhyme. His unrhyming version sounds at least as weird as the very worst of theirs. But as a crib it is the best available, especially in this second edition, where each line matches a line in the original – even, in many cases, to the extent of reproducing the word order. Worse than useless for the reader without Russian, for the learner Nabokov's translation would be just the ticket, if only the commentary were better balanced. But Nabokov's ambitions as a scholar are thwarted by his creativity. He starts shaping the facts before he has fully submitted himself to them. He is immensely knowing, but knowingness is not the same as knowledge.

Expending too much of his energy on being bitchy about other writers, scholars and critics, Nabokov the commentator sounds at best like A. E. Housman waspishly editing an obscure classic. At worst he sounds like A. L. Rowse trying to carry a daft point by sheer lung-power. Calling Dostoevsky 'a much over-rated, sentimental and Gothic novelist' is dull if it is meant to be funny and funny if it is meant to be serious. We are told that Balzac and Sainte-Beuve are 'popular but essentially mediocre writers'. I can't pretend to know much about Balzac, but I am reasonably familiar with Sainte-Beuve, and if he is mediocre then I am a monkey's uncle. Madame de Staël is thoroughly patronised ('a poor observer') without any mention being made of the fact that Pushkin himself thought highly of her. As for Tchaikovsky's version of *Eugene Onegin*, it is not a 'silly opera'. It is a great opera.

But most of this is casual snidery. Distortions of Pushkin's meaning are less forgivable. Commenting on the exchange of dialogue between Tatiana and her nurse, Nabokov, forgetting even to mention *Romeo and Juliet*, concentrates on discrediting the official Soviet view of the

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nurse as a Woman of the People. Yet that view is part of the truth. When the nurse talks about being given in marriage without regard to her own wishes, she is illuminating the condition of slavery. Tatiana might not be really listening to her, but Pushkin is listening, and so should the reader be. This acute social awareness runs right through Pushkin, building up all the time, until in the later prose he provides the model for the social consciousness of all the Russian literature to come. There is nothing naïve about taking cognizance of this elementary fact. Nabokov is naïve in trying to avoid it. Pushkin really *is* the Russian national poet, even if the Soviet regime says so. Above all, he is the national poet of all the people who have been persecuted by that regime in the name of an ideal of justice which Pushkin's very existence proves was once generous and merciful.

Nabokov seems determined to miss the point of what is going on even among the main characters. He tells us all about the books Tatiana has read but fails to notice her gifts of psychological penetration. He can't seem to accept that Tatiana ends by slamming the door in Onegin's face. He claims to detect in Tatiana's final speech 'a confession of love that must have made Eugene's experienced heart leap with joy'. Incredibly, the moral force of Tatiana's personality seems to have escaped him. Nor can he see that Onegin is arid and Lensky fruitful; that the difference between them is the same difference Pushkin saw between Salieri and Mozart; and that the outcome is the same – envy and revenge. Presuming to avoid sentimentality, Nabokov's homage diminishes its object, limiting the reader's view of the range of emotion which Pushkin embraced. Pushkin's artistic personality was the opposite of Nabokov's. Pushkin had negative capability. Not that Pushkin can be equated with Keats, even if you think of Keats's sensibility combined with Byron's airy manner. *Eugene Onegin*'s stature is Shakespearean: you have to imagine a Shakespeare play written with the formal compactness of a poem.

On technique Nabokov gives us what we had a right to expect from the man who invented John Shade. (If only Shade, instead of Charles Kinbote, had written this translation!) There is a long disquisition on prosody which is ruined by pseudo-science. (The spondee is proved mathematically not to exist.) But when Nabokov calls Pushkin's tetrameter 'an acoustical paradise', and takes time to examine the miracle of simple words producing great sonorities, he is writing criticism of the first order. He is also good on trees, houses, carriages, visitors' books, methods of travel, manners – although even here he can't resist going over the top. He finds himself saying that Pushkin was not especially sympathetic with the Russian landscape. There is a certain pathos about that, as if Nabokov were trying to insert himself into the physical reality of the old, lost Russia that will never now return. A doomed attempt and a superfluous one, since by pointing to the source of its literary tradition Nabokov has helped remind us of the Russia that really *is* undying, and in which his place is now secure.

Martin Amis

Dark Laughter

'Don't you think', John Updike nervously asked himself, in the course of a grudging review of *Ada* (1969), 'that your plebeian cavils were anticipated and scornfully dismissed in advance by this towering, snorting wizard?' The wariness is characteristic – and entirely understandable. Few writers have cared less about being 'accessible' than Vladimir Nabokov. Indeed, many readers suspect that his *oeuvre* is specifically designed to repulse, perplex and humble their own cautious efforts to participate in it. To take the most spectacular example, Nabokov spent ten years on *Eugene Onegin*, and Edmund Wilson, an old friend, wrote a detailed attack on the translation; Nabokov's reply was as brutal, funny and devastating as anything in his fiction:

> A patient confidant of Mr Wilson's long and hopeless infatuation with the Russian language and literature, I have invariably done my best to explain to him his monstrous mistakes of pronunciation, grammar and interpretation . . . As late as 1957, at one of our last meetings, we both realised with amused dismay that he still could not scan Russian verse. Upon being challenged to read *Evgeniy Onegin* aloud, he started to perform with great gusto, garbling every second word, and turning Pushkin's iambic line into a kind of spastic anapest with a lot of jaw-twisting haws and rather endearing little barks that utterly jumbled the rhythm and soon had us both in stitches.

When I was on the staff of the *TLS*, I remember discussing with colleagues the possibility of approaching Nabokov for an article. Within minutes we had abandoned the idea and wandered back to our desks, too cowed by the prospect of some totally humiliating retort.

Such meekness is a natural enough reaction to Nabokov's prose manner – with its disdainful erudition and garlicky trilingual puns, its classy daring and intimidating swank. But it is a product, too, perhaps, of the stern and formal dignity of the author's life. A well-born teenage millionaire, evicted from Russia and a cloudless boyhood in 1919, Nabokov went on to combine complete hatred for Soviet communism (see *Bend Sinister*) with 'utter contempt' for those disgruntled exiles who pined for the lost princedoms of the past. Earning his living partly as an athlete, he stayed in Berlin from 1922-37, where, despite his enormous linguistic gifts (and despite the relative exiguity of *émigré* publishing outlets), he chose not to learn German, preferring to get his Russian novels 'out of the way'. After three years in France, he left for America in 1940 and quickly established himself there as an academic (having 'taken the trouble' to write 200 lectures before he arrived); meanwhile, also, he set about becoming an American novelist instead of a Russian one. When international fame accumulated after the publication of *Lolita* (Olympia Press,

Lev Kopelev

NO JAIL FOR THOUGHT

Foreword by Heinrich Boll

"This remarkable autobiography which has reached the West from Russia . . . a unique, vivid historical document . . . fascinating and ruthlessly honest."

Stephen Constant, **Sunday Telegraph**

"Absorbing . . . What makes this narrative outstanding is the unique picture of the sort of men who made Stalin's Russia what it was."

Edward Crankshaw, **Observer**

"It was 'Partyness' that Kopelev was up against, in others and in himself as well. This book is the story of his trials and prison-camps, but – much more importantly – is the autobiography of a loyal and impassioned Soviet communist who could accept any necessity imposed by the Party except sheer national chauvinism." *Neal Ascherson,* **New Statesman**

"Lev Kopelev is one of those towering figures who make a lasting impression after a few minutes of acquaintanceship. His book lives up to this standard."

Nicholas Bethell, **Times**

Translated from the Russian by Anthony Austin.

Photographs **£6.00**

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1955; New York, 1958) Nabokov coolly withdrew to his hotel suite overlooking Lake Geneva, where he lived until his death. 'I pride myself', he told reporters in 1962,

> on being a person with no public appeal. I have never been drunk in my life. I never use schoolboy words of four letters. I have never worked in an office or in a coal mine. I have never belonged to any club or group. No creed or school has had any influence on me whatsoever.

Does this blend of austerity and arrogance (never more brazen than in his comically lordly prefaces and interviews) explain why many readers find him resistible? His stature is by now unshakeable, but a few plebeian cavils still linger. There are critics (Updike is among them) who believe that the unswerving robustness of Nabokov's life cut him off from the sense of sickness and queasy foreboding which 20th-century critics so prize; Nabokov, apparently, was uninterested in 'psychology and sociology': his fiction 'purposely undervalued its own humanistic content'. Other critics feared for Nabokov's moral hygiene – wasn't there a bit too much brio in his empathy with the racked paedophile of *Lolita*, the devious homo of *Pale Fire*, the witty murderer of *Despair*? Yet other critics – and many lay readers – objected flatly to his hybrid style, which they seemed to regard as a conceited elaboration, a tediously roundabout way of saying fundamentally simple things.

Nabokov had two ways of dealing with these objections. The first way consisted of critic-baiting (a hobby rivalling his love of lepidoptery). Everything Nabokov said about his art was as crushing and dead-ended as the Preface to *Dorian Gray*. 'My books have no comment to make . . . Nothing bores me more than the literature of social intent . . . Big, sincere ideas [in novels] amount in the end to bloated topicalities . . . I have no purpose at all when composing my stuff except to compose it.' Nabokov gave no help to his marooned commentators, who felt that they had to plant their feet firmly in one discipline before daring to lean on another: 'What makes a work of fiction safe from larvae and rust is not its social importance but its art, only its art.'

And what was that like? Nabokov's final answer was to create a prose style equal to the unique delicacy and richness of his perceptions, a prose that does not shirk these socio-moral quibbles but includes and embodies them, simply by presenting the imaginative choices as intensely as possible. Here is a paragraph from the early pages of *Lolita*, where the demented Humbert finds himself making nightly love to the middle-aged mother of the child he adores. It has the callous lyricism typical of Humbert's voice, but its lilt turns out to hold all kinds of balances in view:

> So I tom-peeped across the hedges of years, into wan little windows. And when, by means of pitifully ardent, naïvely lascivious caresses, she of the noble nipple and massive thigh prepared me for the performance of my nightly duty, it was still a nymphet's scent that in despair I tried to pick up, as I bayed through the undergrowth of dark decaying forests.

Phillip Knightley

The Sandcastle

T. E. Lawrence by DESMOND STEWART
Hamish Hamilton £7.50

Here we go again. T. E. Lawrence died in 1935, but such is his fascination that by my count the past two years have seen no fewer than ten new books about him, ranging from the weighty German view, *T. E. Lawrence und der arabische Aufstand 1916/18*, to a lavish American hagiography that sells for $50. The star to date has been *A Prince of Our Disorder*, by an American psychiatrist, John Mack. Now, hot on Dr Mack's psychoanalytical study comes this book from Desmond Stewart, Arabic scholar, authority on the Middle East, author of nine books on the area, and biographer of Theodor Herzl. Mr Stewart is a serious writer but the obvious question is: what can there possibly be left for him to say about Lawrence of Arabia that is new or significant? The short answer is: plenty. In fact, if you accept Mr Stewart's thesis – and I do – then the core of virtually every Lawrence biography collapses like a desert sandcastle.

With so many Lawrence buffs about, it is easy for a biographer to become enmeshed in arguments about the trivia of Lawrence's life – did William Morris (later Lord Nuffield) design a special bicycle for the young Ned, or had Morris ceased making bicycles by then? Did Ned wear his hair long in Carchemish, or did he wear it short? What really matters, of course, is to try to decide what Lawrence was up to in the Middle East in the first world war, and why.

The standard version is that the Arabs, under Lawrence's guidance (and perhaps even leadership), waged a brilliant guerrilla campaign against the Turks, blowing up bridges and trains on the Damascus-Medina railway, and thus did their bit to win the war for the Allies. But then the end of the fighting found Lawrence broken in spirit by beastly treatment at the hands of the Bey of Deraa and/or the Bey's sadistic, sodomising soldiers, and disillusioned by the British Government's failure to honour its promise of freedom for the Arabs. Stopping only long enough to dash off *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, Lawrence then deliberately chose a life of obscurity and degradation in the Tank Corps and the RAF until he was killed in a motorcycle accident.

Dr Mack goes further. He decides that Lawrence was one of the greatest men of our times and an inspiration to all. His theory is that Lawrence, driven by his Deraa experience, became a battlefield between purity and passion, unable to resolve his personal disorder. 'Though he could not quiet his own inner demons, he was, in Irving Howe's words, "a prince of our disorder" and one of its civilising forces.'

Mr Stewart will have none of this. Lawrence, he says, was a fantasist and a masochist. The part he played in the Arab Revolt was minimal: he botched the only serious military venture General Allenby entrusted to him. His trip to Damascus behind enemy lines, for which Sir Reginald Wingate recommended he be awarded the Victoria Cross, was just a Lawrence tale. (Wingate could not believe that a British officer would tell fibs.) His rape by the Turks at Deraa was a typical masochistic fantasy; his post-war life of degradation gave him pleasure, and he chose the ranks because it was there that he found partners to satisfy his desires.

This is strong and controversial stuff, but a lot of it, especially Mr Stewart's demolition of the Deraa incident, is very convincing. At this remove, with the Bey of Deraa dead and Lawrence's account the only evidence, it is impossible to be certain about what – if anything – occurred. But by taking Lawrence's account and analysing its internal lack of coherence Mr Stewart makes a powerful case for disbelieving it all. His conclusion is that Lawrence had discovered with one of the Arab leaders, Sharif Ali (Omar Sharif played him in the film), the masochistic pleasure of ritual beating. When he came to write *Seven Pillars*, he created the Deraa fantasy to represent the discovery that 'for him, as for Swinburne before him, pain was the vital ingredient, if not for pleasure, then for release'.

Mr Stewart writes:

> Deraa is not historical in the sense that Allenby's capture of Jerusalem was historical. It embodied an approach to truth which Lawrence shared with such writers as George Borrow, Ford Madox Ford, and George Moore. 'Such writers', David Wright has written, 'take truth as the warp into which a weft of imagination may be woven. The web or embroidery that results is a myth, but often an emblematic myth that recreates, makes explicit or at least illuminates some inherent truth or quality that strict fact may sometimes obscure.'

Poor Lawrence. Today he would have been able to indulge in his sexual predilections, be birched to his bottom's content and, thus freed from guilt and repression, might have been able to devote his talents to something worth while. He might even have got away with it in the Twenties, but for Lowell Thomas, the American publicist who made Lawrence into an international hero whose reputation demanded protection.

In the end, under Mr Stewart's relentless probing, Lawrence emerges as a pathetic figure and his real role in the Middle East is revealed as a shoddy one. His Bedouin warriors fought for gold, not ideals, and were despised by true Arab nationalists. Lawrence felt deeply about certain individual Arabs but had little time for Arabs in general. Moreover, as a servant of Imperial Britain, he lied to them, misled them, and betrayed them. 'An Arab's right to freedom depended on the extent to which he helped the Allies,' writes Mr Stewart. 'That an Arab might want freedom, yet believe that collaboration with the colonisers of Algeria and Egypt was the wrong way to win it, did not occur to him.' This is not the last word on Lawrence – J. M. Wilson is at work on the mammoth task of the authorised biography – but it is certainly the most perceptive view of the man to date.

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Hilary Spurling

Mstique

It Changed My Life: Writings on the Women's Movement by BETTY FRIEDAN *Gollancz* £5.95

It is presumably no accident that Messrs Gollancz should have chosen to publish Betty Friedan's call to arms at a point almost exactly midway between St Sexburga's Day and the feast last month of that even greater patron of militant Anglo-Saxon feminism, Sexburga's sister, the sainted virgin Etheldreda. Etheldreda was an East-Anglian princess who married two kings and refused to sleep with either until in 673, after 20 years or so of male intimidation ranging from moral blackmail to brute force, she fled from her second husband's armies to sanctuary at Ely, then a virtually inaccessible swamp, where flocks of defaulting wives, widows and virgins promptly joined her, and where the fervour of her own virginity became not only a legend in her lifetime but a force to be reckoned with for nearly 1,000 years after her death. She has always seemed to me a distinctly modern type: not simply in her implacable attitude to men (though here, too, one may see aspects of the stern sisterhood described by Ms Friedan, which seeks to eliminate man altogether and elevate lesbianism to the first principle of the women's movement), still more in her understanding that the liberation of women might become, if properly organised, a formidable source of power.

It is in this respect, rather than in her loathing of the marriage bed, that Etheldreda resembles Ms Friedan. One of the most fascinating parts of *It Changed My Life* describes the writing of her first, famous manifesto, *The Feminine Mystique*, and its electrifying effect in 1963 on the wives and mothers of America. Its author became a celebrity overnight, ostracised by her suburban neighbours ('the children were kicked out of the dancing-class car pool') but idolised by thousands more, whose passionate letters of support led eventually to the founding of the women's movement in America and Europe. No one could have predicted the scale of these complaints from unknown prisoners at the kitchen sink ('Here I am: I feel like an appliance! I want to live!'), nor the comprehensive scope of their resentment, anger and frustration. Admittedly, Ms Friedan writes at times as though housewives held exclusive rights to bitterness and boredom; even so, there can be small doubt that the book released something she herself describes in almost mystical terms:

> I believe . . . it's an unprecedented new kind of power in the world, one that threatens the old control of political and economic power by church and state in ways we ourselves are only dimly aware of.

This is the language of revolution and, like all able revolutionaries, Ms Friedan deals in dreams ('The new dreams, the real dreams women must make come true themselves') as much as in rational analysis: one is not surprised to learn that on one occasion she reduced an audience of hostile college boys to tears, and on another touched the heart of the Pope in person. Equality for women in her book will not only promote personal fulfilment, economic emancipation and moral independence; it will also increase the sum of happiness for both sexes (special benefits – 'less nagging, less guilt, fewer problems' – promised for men), strengthen the marriage bond and lower the divorce rate; and, if it won't actually make your hair curl, it will certainly act against old age, loneliness and fading looks, not to mention being well on the way to abolishing war itself (by removing 'the frustrations built into our sexual roles that made us explode in violence and want to napalm all the green life in Vietnam, and club the long-haired young').

All this rests partly on faith, but partly on a grasp of practical priorities at the farthest remove from that ideological insistence on the moral superiority of women as a class which is shared, oddly enough, by both the radical lesbian sisters who hold it rank treachery to consort with men, and by the apparently highly organised viragos of such all-American institutions as Total Womanhood or the Pussycat League. No one could set her face more resolutely against extremists of either persuasion than Ms Friedan. Hers is a peaceable revolution to be brought about by education, for which she predicts precisely the consequences – increased independence, self-reliance and self-respect – once foretold with dread by opponents of the 19th-century New Woman.

Indeed, one is forcibly struck again and again by parallels between her arguments and those of what one might call the hoop-trundling school ('Why can't people let girls dress dolls and trundle hoops, as they used to?') led by Charlotte M. Yonge more than a century ago. Both are above all concerned with the feminine mystique. Both confidently prophesy its destruction if girls once start to think. And both are preaching to the same congregation, since the sex-object schooled in self-repression, the subservient wife and selfless mother described so feelingly by Ms Friedan possess all the characteristics of Miss Yonge's 'average woman of the higher type . . . made to learn; to lean; to admire; to support; to emphasise every joy; to soften every sorrow of the object of her devotion'. The Victorian line of duty – so unenticing at the time that Miss Yonge was regularly obliged to devise spectacular punishments like brain fever, destitution and death for girls who flouted it – turns out in short to be at bottom none other than that round of car pool, cookie jar and coffee morning, dancing class and scout pack to which in recent years the women's movement has given such unequivocally sinister connotations. No wonder if housewives from Rome to Rio prefer to see themselves as, in Ms Friedan's phrase, the heroines of 'herstory': 'Women's life now for us all means moving on unmapped roads, with signposts non-existent or none too clear, mapping it as we go . . .'

This is stirring stuff, and so are the grand set scenes in which, as the book fans out from the domestic to the international front, we find the women's movement forced to pit itself alone against the combined reactionary forces of the FBI, CIA and international communism. But one would be hard put to find a shrewder, more level-headed and resourceful strategist than Ms Friedan, nor one half so eloquent; and it would be a stony heart which did not rejoice to think that, even 13 centuries later and on another continent, St Etheldreda rides again.

Peter Jenkins

Garden Party

Convention by RICHARD REEVES *Hutchinson* £4.50

It must have seemed a great idea to comission a blow-by-blow reportorial account of the nominating convention of the Democratic Party in 1976. The two previous conventions certainly had been good vehicles, and the one in Chicago in 1968 had provided a Mailer classic. This one was to be held in New York City, which meant that anything could happen – the candidate might even be mugged on his way to the platform to accept the nomination. At the time *Convention* was commissioned, the received wisdom was

Anita Desai

Fire on the Mountain

"... beautifully accomplished and memorable... This is a short novel and both intensely moving and oddly remote. It repays re-reading. I admire it unreservedly"

Susan Hill, The Times

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that the proliferation of primary elections combined with additional democratic rules for candidate selection would produce an open convention. Indeed, according to Richard Reeves, the Democratic Party chairman Robert Strauss had in November 1975 dictated a memo concerning arrangements for 'the smoke-filled room'. There was also the possibility that history might repeat itself, if only as burlesque, for when the Democrats had last been in New York in 1924, John W. Davis of West Virginia (Johnny who?) had been nominated on the 104th ballot.

Well, the best-laid plans can go awry, as this reviewer found when, two hours before the convention was due to begin, one of Sardi's martinis refused to negotiate already sore tonsils with the result that he spent the entire proceedings in bed, so enfeebled in body and mind that he watched every moment of the television coverage and was thus, probably, the only person in New York to see the whole of the *real* convention. Necessity in her benevolence may have done a similar turn for Richard Reeves who, denied the opportunity of indulging in the somewhat crude form of *investigative* political reporting in which he specialises, has written an amusing, illuminating and often touching account of Jimmy Carter's nomination which will deserve at least a minor place in the rich American tradition of extended reportage. Historians may even be indebted to him in the way we are indebted to, for example, Cardinal Guillaume Fillastre for his journal of the Great Papal Council of Constance (1414), in which he records that among the 72,460 persons who came to the city were 1,700 trumpeters and fifers, 5,300 priests and scholars, 1,400 merchants, innkeepers and tradesmen and 700 prostitutes. By comparison the New York Police Department estimated the arrival of between 5,000 and 10,000 out-of-town prostitutes to cater for the 42,623 accredited persons of one kind or another who attended for the nomination of Jimmy Carter at the Madison Square Garden.

Reeves, who had eight leg-persons at his disposal, charts the convention through the daily experiences of a cross-section of participants and hangers-on – Bob Strauss, the Texas political huckster who was the impresario of the whole affair; Clare Smith, the youngest delegate; Richard Celeste, a Lieutenant Governor with longshot presidential ambitions; Joe Kaselak, whose sole ambition in life is to intrude into camera shot; Annie, a black hooker who made $800 a day at the Miami Beach Convention in 1972; and so on. Perhaps the idea was that all their lives would meld beautifully together in a kind of *Ragtime* of political journalism, but the four days were not eventful enough for this. What makes the book interesting and highly readable is simply the miscellaneous information it contains about people and about New York; it works as a documentary rather than as a narrative in the manner of a novel.

[illegible], for example, the phenomenal [illegible]all – $40 to change a light bulb and $27[illegible] to have a power point moved at the M[illegible] Square Garden; a dollar for a [illegible] for a bottle of champagne [illegible] the Americana, which was the Carter hotel; $229.49 to have a telephone installed anywhere in the city. The 'Garden' is one of the most avaricious union closed-shops to be found in the world: it cost one television company $1,800 to move in a prefabricated 20-by-11-foot wooden office, and when the convention was over plates of glass on the fronts of the network control booths, which had cost $15,000, were smashed because it would have cost more than their worth to remove them.

Vignettes which stick in the memory, a few among many, are Reeves's description of the programming of CBS anchorman Walter Cronkite; Clare Smith at last obtaining Hunter Thompson's autograph; William Vanden Heuvel's failure to gain admittance to the *Rolling Stone* party; and this television interview with Amy Carter:

> 'Do you have any advice for the young people of America?'
> 'No.'
> 'Thank you, Amy. Back to you, Walter.'

That was what the 1976 convention was like. It helps to know some of the people, or at least what they are. It helps to know New York City. It helps to know the atmosphere of American politics in an election year. To many English readers *Convention* may seem trivial and utterly inconsequential, a bewildering piece of Americana. They will learn nothing of use from it about President Carter, but they will learn something about the cast of thousands of aspiring extras which go into that greatest production of all, the making of an American President.

Jonathan Keates

No, Honestly

The Fake's Progress by TOM KEATING, GERALDINE and FRANK NORMAN *Hutchinson* £5.50

The Tom Keating Catalogue edited by GERALDINE NORMAN *Hutchinson* £9.50

Geraldine Norman is unlikely to recall that she and I once sat next to each other at dinner in a house in Tuscany. I was then a gauche undergraduate, she a soignée young reporter covering Sotheby's first important Italian sale. Fresh from economic journalism, she was the first person I had ever met with so single-minded a view of art as a commodity, and I shuddered somewhat as she spoke, coolly but toughly, of her interest in the relationship of painting to finance.

Ingenuous as it may have been, that frisson has never wholly subsided over years of reading her absorbing *Times* saleroom column. Since our meeting, the hair swept so neatly into a chignon has been (literally) let down, and Miss Kean has become Mrs Norman, losing thereby none of her alert, articulate professionalism. As an architect of the *Times*-Sotheby Index she has done much towards creating in the art world the atmosphere of suave commercialism which the Keating forgeries were in part meant to destroy: that they have failed to do so is, ironically maybe, a measure of her success. I doubt if, for example, the Mentmore sale would have achieved such glamour and notoriety without Mrs Norman's insistent, almost weekly reminders that everything has its price.

For *The Fake's Progress* is very much Geraldine's book. She it was who rumbled the pseudo-Palmers and hunted down Keating in Suffolk, thus fluttering the art market and landing a News Reporter of the Year award. In the excellent closing essay on 'Art Trading and Art Faking' (where she might, had she chosen, have hit a good deal harder) it is difficult not to detect a pardonable smirk of self-satisfaction.

The rest, however, is simply toe-curling. For reasons not made clear, both Geraldine and Frank, as they style themselves, have a profound and, as it seems, rather misplaced faith in their Keating, laid on with a comparable attention to highlighting, lining and varnishing. Geraldine refers to 'Tom's *oeuvre*' and to 'the Suffolk period', implying a determination to get the old boy, if not a mention in Bénézit, at least a slot in the *Penguin Dictionary of Art and Artists*. Frank, on the other hand, as author of *Fings Aint Wot They Used T'Be*, is anxious, judging by the egregious foreword, that we should see Keating as the cockney hero, who has (no, honestly) 'pulled himself up by his bootstraps in the best working-class tradition'.

Over everything in the Tale of Tom Keating hangs a reminiscent miasma of Victorian cheap journalism, something from the world of the *Police News*, *Tit-Bits* and those ghosted autobiographies of naughty Hapsburg archduchesses good for a juicy browse in secondhanders. The infant faker's birth is introduced by two tear-jerking paragraphs telling us that on the same day Degas was staggering up the Boulevard de Clichy, and that what with the Russian Revolution and the Western Front and all, 'it seemed civilisation could not survive much longer'.

But along comes Tom, 'artist and socialist', and the romance begins. While in the navy he is saved in the nick of time from multiple rape by drunken shipmates; in France he meets Casals on a mountaintop and Picasso in a café (we are spared Cocteau jumping out of a *bombe surprise* and Maria Callas coated in anchovy sauce); he has a very long hobnob with a Royal Personage:

> 'It really is incredible.' She pointed at the rear end of Laguerre's horses. 'Have you finished?'
> 'It will need a bit of titivating and a coat of varnish, madam,' I said. 'But to be honest I don't think I have the courage to continue, madam, I'm sorry.'
> 'I don't think you lack that, Mr Keating,' she replied.

Keating then does a Rosemary Brown with Goya, and discovers an El Greco upon which he promptly improves, after which the whole story reaches an abrupt conclusion.

It is not an El Greco of course, but in so bizarre a context authenticity is neither here nor there. It becomes, indeed, quite

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stunningly irrelevant when we turn to the expensively got-up *catalogue raisonné* which accompanies the 'as-told-to'. Those who have followed this depressingly moral tale of a severely limited artistic talent employed in fooling complacent experts and playing upon the snobbery and greed of vendors and purchasers will have encountered Keating's use of the term 'Sexton Blake' to refer to his imitations. Laid end to end, their various deceptions, particularly apparent in the marshmallow-eyed *kitsch* of his irredeemably modern-looking faces, are transparent enough to demand the inevitable question: how could they have been passed off in the first place?

To say that such faking is tantamount to repeating the original creative process obviates argument by its sheer inbuilt fatuity. Both books convince us that Keating has a deep knowledge of practical picture-making, and credibly suggest that he is among the best living restorers. But to imply, as the authors do, that his recent exploits were prompted by a wish to avenge the slights suffered by painters of the past at the hands of the art world is either unworthy resentment or plain hypocrisy. His triumph, with an *Observer* serial and the extraordinary spectacle of a national daily last week cringingly apologising for having called him a forger, now seems complete. Yet the galleries and sale rooms have closed ranks and the market, though a trifle tremulous, has resumed business as before. Tom himself, through the volume and consistency of his faking, is unlikely to be forgotten: the literary Keating produced by the shrewd Geraldine and Frank deserves instant oblivion.

George Melly

The Centre Holds

Surrealism 1919-1939 by GAËTAN PICON
Skira/Macmillan £20

It looks strictly for the coffee tables, but the late Gaëtan Picon's last book is more than that. Although the text is at the mercy of the chic typography and has to wriggle its way as best it can round the reproductions and photographs, it's worth persisting. Here is a serious attempt to define and chronicle the most intelligent and intuitive movement of this century. It is neither an academic exercise, nor the usual resurrection of inter-group squabbles and provocative public 'scandals'. The content is analytical, the tone one of sustained elegaic regret. He writes:

> But if Surrealism is the ground soil from which we have sprung, it is also the air in which we have grown older; it attracts us like our lost youth.

Today most people believe Surrealism to have been exactly what it declared itself not to be: a school of painting allied to a group of poets. Picon firmly corrects this view, albeit in a format apparently determined to confirm it. Surrealism, he explains,

> was a life-style, a venture launched by a small band of individuals . . . who were intent on a deeper understanding of the main experiences of life: the solitude of dreams, the love of man and woman, the togetherness of action.

Its aim was a total revolution, internal as much as external. Its hope was to discover the means to breach the walls dividing the conscious from the unconscious, reality from dream, desire from fulfilment. A daunting programme, yet the young men who drew it up were inspired equally by hope and rage. The reasons for their failure are in retrospect clear enough but, looking about us now, we would be more advised to weep than sneer. Whatever our reaction to them today, the poems and paintings were meant in their time to be no more than a foretaste of the possibilities ahead, a partial vision of life as it could become.

Picon charts, without retrospective mockery, those dizzy radical shifts of direction, each of them instantly justified by Breton at his most magisterial: Automatism and induced trances, the failed courtship of Russian communism, allegiance to Trotsky, the simulation of states of madness, the retreat into hermetic mysticism. He understands that these were the adoption of different strategies aimed at a breakthrough. The flirtation with the Soviet Union, for example, was not exactly rare among intellectuals in the Thirties, but in the case of the Surrealists it was of remarkably short duration. Trotsky, the caged eagle, welcomed their adherence, but had he succeeded in ousting Stalin it is doubtful if the realities of Marxist power would have made him much more sympathetic to those passionate advocates of convulsive beauty. Anarchism was in the end the only possible political climate in which Surrealism could breathe and this was finally acknowledged.

Why did Surrealism, in the immediate and practical sense, fail? The answer must appear a paradox. It was because it succeeded in attracting from its very beginning painters and poets of dazzling talent and in some cases incontestable genius. At the same time it demanded from them, and in the name of liberty, complete allegiance to a collective ideal which, in practice, turned out to mean an acceptance of the dictatorship of André Breton.

It is too easy to dismiss Breton as a megalomaniac, well deserving the mocking title bestowed on him by those who left or were expelled from the movement, 'the Pope of Surrealism'. It is true he was at times arbitrary and inconsistent; without him, though, there would have been no coherence, no centre. The portrait of him in this book makes no attempt to conceal his blemishes, but finally he emerges as a figure of enormous stature. Those who were with him, while they were with him, were almost all under his remarkable spell. I met him only once and was instantly seduced by his grave charm, his ability to make one feel that his friendship was a true and precious gift.

Although at times the defection of some Surrealists was perfectly justified, and at others their expulsion entirely unreasonable, the resulting attacks on Breton had the demonic hysteria of fallen angels banished from the sight of God. One thing is sure. Without exception the best work of the great poets and painters was produced while they were within the movement. Aragon, perhaps the most audacious of the founder-members, left to become a communist and for the rest of his long life has churned out nothing but the most sterile 'social realism'. Ernst denied his Surrealist past and finished up painting pretty pictures of increasing banality. Dali, with characteristic extremity, turned both fascist and Catholic and lurched into unbearable kitsch.

Not that Breton was without guile in the furtherance of Surrealist publicity. As Picon points out, he was reluctant to lose Dali, and allowed him a great deal of leeway before finally and inevitably dismissing him from the ranks. When Ernst and Miro designed settings for Diaghilev they were brought sharply to heel, whereas Picasso, whose friendly feelings towards the movement were extremely helpful, could design as many ballet sets as he liked, even in conjunction with the Surrealists' *bête noire*, Jean Cocteau, and not a word was said. Breton was no saint, but without his burning intelligence, his power to inspire, Surrealism would have collapsed almost immediately.

Apart from a short précis of the years leading up to Breton's death in 1966, Picon's book finishes, correctly in my view, in 1939. For many reasons, but perhaps especially because of the departure of Breton and others to the US during the war, Surrealism was unable to resume the centre of the

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stage. To have remained in Europe, to have joined the Resistance or the Communist party, or both, had become the badge of intellectual respectability. Breton returned to find Sartre enthroned. The movement's new recruits were more noisy than effective. The manifestos and pronouncements seemed to be irrelevant and old hat. The adventure petered out.

Then a surprise. Breton's funeral was attended by thousands of young people, and during the revolt of '68 many of his statements were recruited as graffiti. This book is full of images of astounding visual or verbal beauty, but while maintaining that 'Surrealism', which brought them into being, is certainly dead, Monsieur Picon was too wise to be sure that surrealism isn't alive and kicking.

Susannah Clapp

Sinspots

My Life Closed Twice by NIGEL WILLIAMS *Secker and Warburg* £3.90
A Mountain at the End of Night by CAROLINE GLYN *Gollancz* £4.95
The Survivor by GEORGE MACBETH *Quartet* £4.95
Scene Changing by EDWARD CANDY *Gollancz* £3.75

'Many facets of modern life – Oxford, suburbia, free love – come under his genial lash,' cajoles the blurb to *My Life Closed Twice*. It is a tribute to the accuracy of Nigel Williams's first novel that these gasps could be mistaken for some of the grislier literary imaginings of the narrator, who spends much of his time conjuring up likely critical responses to his projected novel, along with more improbably inviting fan-mail ('I am 18, blonde and with big breasts . . .').

Spite and bewilderment keep Martin Steel – a haggard 27-year-old – at his desk plotting fictional vengeance on most of his past: on Julie, the girl who slept with someone else first; on Derek, who brought this to pass; and eventually, on his wife Ellen who, capering through a number of *Lucky Jim*-style routines, first cackles insubordinately outside the author's study, and later, with equal insubordinacy, ceases to be there at all. Steel's notes on the difficulties of welding this cast into a comprehensively damning fiction balloon into a series of neatly anchored loops and digressions: there are some profitable asides on such subsidiary unpleasantnesses as the College Bar (where 'huge Celts, puzzled by their subjects, drank themselves into a stupor every night'); the stars themselves skitter, alternately blessed and blamed, through their various parts too rapidly to congeal into either gibbering comic horrors or sadly misjudged saints.

Despite some lapses into over-concentrated larkiness, *My Life Closed Twice* is surprisingly wily in avoiding the obvious traps of a knowingly funny novel. The narrator's crabbedness exists mostly in proportion to his eagerness to please, but the novel skirts sentimental twists on this issue: there are no sudden lurches into a 'sincere' as opposed to a 'bitter' voice. It is also peculiarly generous in granting another character a percipience equal to the narrator's. Ellen's antics for coping with the routine grimnesses of everyday life prove saner than her husband's, and her judgment surer: because of this, his final pinioning is both convincing and surprising.

Caroline Glyn's *A Mountain at the End of Night* is subtitled – ominously for some, engagingly for others – 'Stories of Dream and Vision', and the author explains in a foreword that each story in the collection is in fact the result of a dream or vision she had, each of which featured 'God in some guise'. The stories range from Africa to Aberystwyth, and number among their protagonists nuns, tramps and harassed housewives, but the apparent diversity of settings and seers serves mostly to point up the similarity of the experiences described.

Sacredness or desecration are generally quite explicitly present from the beginning – in an old woman's delight in her magnolia tree, in a priest's desolation at the harshness of his Australian parish. With the possibility of holiness always hovering, the transfiguring moment granted to each character strikes with rather less than surprise, and the quality of these experiences (whether they take the form of mountains flooded with dawn light, sudden stabs of Christmas charity, or the appearance of a wounded unicorn) rapidly becomes familiar through repeated rolls about 'the awe, grief, horror and beauty', or 'the wonder, the joy and the sorrow'. The most successful stories are the most novelistic. 'The Badger Mask', in which an experienced nurse wonders whether she has unwittingly been murdering her geriatric charges, manages to divert the attention towards ordinariness, combining, with economy and conviction, a considerable amount of biographical data and a memorably vicious central image. But read in one gulp (and the author's foreword implies that to do so is fairer than usual) these stories are self-defeatingly profligate with their visionariness.

Sinning and salvation also have their place in *The Survivor*, in which a second world-war Japanese pilot crash-lands on a Pacific island, survives and promptly proceeds to atone for his incestuous relationship with his daughter by grinding through an undiluted stream of nightmare 'illusions'. While the carcasses of giant rays stink on the beach, and jungle creepers do some predictable shrivelling, the treats on offer include: seduction by a labrador, masturbation in the bath to the tune of an eightsome reel ('it was as if the bagpipes worked like an aphrodisiac'), the dismembering of a body, and fellatio as 'a gesture of primeval recognition'. The careful inwardness of the description is overlaid with somewhat obscure asides about *tsukas* and *kashiras*, and with an ill-defined air of significance. A doubtfully efficient means of expiation.

Edward Candy's *Scene Changing* dispatches its business with more of a sting than at first appears likely from its rather gracious tone and its careful division of characters into the naïvely good-hearted and the brittly ambitious. It is clear from the outset that little good will come of the meeting between a provincial novelist (languishing in a town suitably equipped with many fogs and mean minds) and a successful, much-married dramatist. A stolid boring is present early on to spell out the damage that stage adaptation may bring both to the 'tiny nuances' of the original story (about a child molester) and to the originator of the tiny nuances – and, sure enough, as success looms, so do callous charming directors, lusciously promiscuous actresses, and a general glut of crassness and champagne. The allocation of sincerity and sensitivity among individuals is painstakingly signalled and never in doubt – but the amount of influence and contentment each is finally awarded proves more surprising and astute.

Geoffrey Grigson

Birth of Criticism

Larking down the alleys, riled,
Where they are cluttered and defiled
I met a very little child

Perusing poems upside down
With a slightly petulant frown
Inside a very squalid town.

Tiny Lamb, I dared to utter,
Stranger to this mental gutter,
Where they won't tell marge from butter,

What's reduced you to this pass,
Who should be gambolling on the grass?
Piss off, the Lamb said, Kiss my arse.

I'm reading — — and — — — —
And other masters of cold gravy
And *Imagistes from Tyne to Tavy*.

And my glittering Ph. D.
Will very soon enable me
To climb the professorial tree

And promulgate in flat reviews
Who's who exactly with the Muse
Of Forces, Fields and Avenues.

I gave a teeny cautious cough,
Again the Lamb exclaimed Piss off,
Piss off, you flyblown *Sonnen*-toff.

And pissing off I said God damn,
How quickly does the Little Lamb
Become the bullying pert I Am.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Coleman

Good Company

The Late Show (AA) *Warner West End 4*
The Spy Who Loved Me (A) *Odeon, Leicester Square*
Islands in the Stream (A) *Plaza 2*
Nasty Habits (A) *ABC, Shaftesbury Avenue*

Those in Bondage will have to wait a minute or two. Robert Benton – new viewers, begin here – was co-author of the script for *Bonnie and Clyde* with David Newman; with the same fellow and Buck Henry wrote Bogdanovich's leeching *What's Up, Doc?*; in the same year (1972) directed his own first feature, *Bad Company*, an excellent, off-centre debut about a group of youths on the run and on the make in the airy, desert spaces of 1860s America. He has now written and directed *The Late Show*, not – as he was the first to admit at the press show the other day – entirely on his own. Robert Altman produced, to start with, and an Altman actress, Lily Tomlin (*Nashville*), plays an insecure, over-articulate Margo as if she were just spouting to camera, which she sometimes was. That Mr Benton, who *had* written down a script in the first place, was prepared to give her her talking head is anyway remarkable in a medium noted for dropsical egos. That Art Carney, the tiresome old urban guru who takes to the road in Paul Mazursky's misbegotten *Harry and Tonto*, should not only be cast as one Ira Wells, a superannuated private-eye, but show his responsive professionalism by picking up some of Miss Tomlin's scatty, new-minted lines and letting himself find a beautiful, natural gesture, a stonewalling riposte utterly in character, says a great deal for him, his director and producer. Altman's *The Long Goodbye*, the up-dated Chandler with Elliott Gould as a mazy, drunken, cat-loving Marlowe, affronted many an aficionado. But there is no reason why such over-rated scribes should not be toyed with in a contemporary idiom. According to Mr Benton, an honest, genial interlocutor, Altman *qua* producer had a nagging sense that *The Long Goodbye* left things undone. *The Late Show*, then, a titular reference to small-hours viewing of past treats on US TV, partly aimed to redress an imbalance.

As in the Chandler-based, Howard Hawks-directed *The Big Sleep*, plot is at some distance from the essence: the thinking viewer is similarly advised to lean back and give his mind a holiday, even if there is a longish, token explanation of who did what to whom and why, a verbal unravelling by the ageing Ira, with Carney's lameness and hearing-aid (and a perforated ulcer all Ira's own), near the end – when we learn he has been 31 years in the business. 'I'm a loner,' he further explains, trying to ward off the garrulous, sad, trendy, real-faced Margo, who first impinges on the story when Ira is attending the funeral of an ex-dick, Harry (Howard Duff, who dies even faster than Janet Leigh in *Psycho*), and zanily offering Ira $25 to recover her cat, Winston, snatched by a crooked boyfriend. Carney's dismissive back-flip with both hands as he walks away from her and an old acquaintance of his, Charlie, is masterly – and was, again, his own invention. Story next demands that Ira connects the pussy-snatch with Harry's death, which he has sworn to avenge – his running, wheezing motivation throughout the ensuing trot-through of corpses galore, birds behind shower curtains, and grand greenery houses with swimming-pools. When Ira, at one point, has to produce his credentials, they resolve into a dog-eared card, Private Investigator, with a lifetime of use and abuse wrinkled upon it.

'Sorry you're going off, pal. You were real good company. The best,' says Ira, watching Harry seep to death. 'The very best.' These shades of Chandler are then fairly firmly drawn. Kooky Margo, who takes the old has-been with a love that dares to speak its name *sotto voce* thanks to her off-screen visits to a shrink ('You're cute,' she manages, before another station of the plot emerges), is both with-it shrew ('Do you know that people with guns are generally impotent?'), free-wheeling complainer ('*And*, on top of that, I've got my period', at which Ira shows old-world distaste), and screamingly happy companion, with chat ('I'm high') after a successful car-chase of becoming his distaff detective – 'like Nick and Nora', only this reference to Hammett of *The Thin Man* books and, subsequently, movies, is neatly gauged to put those of us nearer Ira's years than hers to feeling our arteries: she talks of some telly nonsense, with Peter Lawford and a lady whose name I didn't catch, where I expected William Powell and Myrna Loy.

As with a good Altman exercise, like *Nashville*, the love for this, and the fun, are likely to stem from the details. A sexually equivocal strong-arm chappie, protecting a smiley fence, Birdwell (marvellously genial in Eugene Roche's expansive performance), is invited by Ira to jump in Birdwell's pool, a gun on the fancy bodyguard: 'Screw you,' he whines, 'this is a cashmere jacket', prettily picking up its tails before immersion. There is a Hitchcock gag, shown to us but withheld from the participants on screen, about a body in a fridge. There is a wildly hirsute, hippie gardener on the lawns of an L.A. mansion, peevish when Ira hands him a note for his boss: 'What do I look like – some kind of social secretary?' This is the American new wave – and Benton admits that his first mind-opening experience, at a bad, personal time, was Truffaut's *Jules et Jim* – with the camera keenly put on a stretch known for shipwrecks, interesting flotsam and jetsam. It is much harder to bring off than that sounds and I wonder a little how much audiences will settle for slightly in-jokes.

In last week's NS Amis Sr read the news, reviewing the book of the film, about what had happened to Ian Fleming's *The Spy Who Loved Me* on the way to the cinema. Simply, it had been gutted, leaving the title. Mr Adam, to whom Centre Point would be a draughtsman's doodle, has thus been left with the business of master-minding megalomaniac structures. 'The world's largest film stage was built at Pinewood especially for the interiors of the supertanker which kidnaps three nuclear submarines' (production notes). Lewis Gilbert – previous Bond entry, *You Only Live Twice* – has done a thoroughly professional job with a script weak on the old sexual *double-ententes* and strong on hardware: a Lotus 'Esprit' that can go underwater, a 'Wetbike' which skims on Christ-like wheels, Russian ciggies that project sleep-drugs, a ticker-tape watch, a Union-Jack parachute. This last figures in the by now mandatory show-stopping pre-credit sequence: the treat here is an astounding ski-jump performed by Rick Sylvester. Roger Moore is more plastic than heretofore as an 007 twinned with Russian Triple X (Barbara Bach) against the new world-conqueror Curt Jurgens, who believes a submarine civilisation is the only answer. His big-deal laboratory, Atlantis, squats like a vast, iron-heavy, quadruped spider on and under the sea off Costa Smeralda. The saving humanoid is a 7ft 2in, 315-pounder baddie called Jaws (Richard Kiel) because he has vampire metal teeth and keeps popping back from the dead – to rapturous audience applause at the press show – for his next nastiness. It *looks* expensive, all right; is rotten with *machismo*: an ideal outing for the prospective football-pools winner that lies slumped in most of us.

What Franklin J. Schaffner thought he was doing taking a posthumous, uncompleted novel by Ernest Hemingway is beyond conjecture, unless it was to furnish the definitive assault on the Old Man's soft underbelly. Set in 1940 on the Bahaman island of Bimini, clumsily photographed and generally mismanaged in such important episodes as one of George Scott's film sons trying, with bloodied hands and feet, to land a whopping marlin, *Islands in the Stream* has to be seen to be disbelieved. The dialogue, for all its staccato, is left heavily to hinge on the word 'love': mostly that of a twice-divorced artist-loner-poppa for his three boys, living and dying with their mommas. Claire Bloom visits briefly as a drawn, tough beauty (the first wife, about to wed a general – Scott's Patton?) and oddly a sole true note as a Hemingway lady. David Hemmings weirdly appears in the old Walter Brennan drunk's role from *To Have and Have Not*. The only noteworthy thing about *Nasty Habits*, drawn – they say – from Muriel Spark's *The Abbess of Crewe*, then hung and quartered by pro-

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ducer-writer Robert Enders and director Michael Lindsay-Hogg, is the reviews it has received across the big pond. Sorry, but – for all its feminine glories of Glenda Jackson, Geraldine Page, Anne Jackson, Sandy Dennis, even Edith Evans at an early last gasp – this pathetic Watergate-parallel, these *Habits* one must surely kick.

Television

Russell Davies

Moonshine

Dreaming up imaginary TV programmes is quite fun – *Patrick Campbell Interviews, Yoga with Magnus Pyke, Obscurity Squares* – but pretty pointless when ITV is already putting out material you couldn't invent. What about a programme where Hughie Green asked Lady Falkender what films she would take on a trip to the moon? Such was last week's *Moon Movies* (Anglia). The moon, said Hughie, stepping out of a taxi in Wyndham Mews, W1, was a place where many men would have liked to send Lady Falkender; she, he added, had 'sat for many years on the right hand of power'. Leaving us only a moment to consider which of Sir Harold Wilson's mannerisms this might account for, he boldly penetrated the Falkender flat.

The programme did its best to live up to the absurdity of its promise. Lady F. appeared in an earth-mother floral wigwam topped off by her great out-Thatchering floss of hair. Hughie, his chair seemingly some yards away from hers, but pointing in the same direction, addressed his questions backwards over his shoulder at a pain-in-the-neck angle. The answers: no, she had never wanted to be an MP. That was 'the theatrical side of the business'. What did she want her two sons to grow up to be? 'Happy.' (As brisk a return of service, this, as any seen at Wimbledon.) Who was the most fascinating head of state, then? This was where I dropped my notebook. 'Ian Smith,' said the moll under the floss. 'A very *colourful* man, a very attractive man. He can hold his own with the best politicians in the Western world.' Suddenly the tang of hormones was in the air: Lady F was giving us the feminine angle. It was a relief to escape into the next banal extract from *Barry Lyndon, The Graduate, Dr Zhivago* or *Young Frankenstein*, all of which she took to the moon, plus a faith-healer for company. Hughie Green, closing the programme for some reason in a completely different outfit of dark suit, dark tie and pipe, looked for all the world like Sir Harold in an elongating mirror.

This was at least bizarre. The rest of the week's interviews were flops. Sir Robert Mark's *Top Cop* grilling (BBC-1) never showed up at all, having been put off to a later date. In ITV's *Granwick* round-up, Godfrey Hodgson succeeded in getting a nice flow of liberal disclaimers bubbling out of Sir Keith Joseph on the subject of the closed-shop – of course the dispute was not about that, nobody had asked for a closed shop, etc – and then faced him with the fact that he, Joseph, had provocatively raised the matter in an inflammatory *Daily Mail* article a few days before. Joseph was honest enough to look embarrassed, but this was not a spectacle worth sitting through an unremarkable résumé for.

And then there was *Frost* (BBC-1). Frost gives everybody the kind of showbiz intro (in sound only this time, fortunately) that Kermit the Frog gives Fozzie Bear; this time the recipient was Yasser Arafat. Revealed in his secret Beirut HQ, Arafat proved to be in charming form, and manifested a touching faith in Jimmy Carter, another man who believes in 'Got'. He resisted personal questions; but Frost finally wrung from him the information that he would like a family one day. I got the feeling that if Frost had been in really top gear, beseeching away like Father O'Flynn in the death cell, he might have got Arafat to admit that he smoked Camels, or wore St Michael underpants. That's the best we're likely to get from Frost. His contacts are amazing, but politically he is null.

Last week's *Omnibus* (BBC-1) and Sunday's *The Lively Arts* (BBC-2) together made a blushing attempt to knock down a cultural barrier. They are not good at this. It embarrasses them, and makes them sound like patronising vicars. The point this time was to bring together the London Symphony Orchestra and the Black Dyke Mills brass band in musical performance at the Albert Hall. As Humphrey Burton put it, André Previn, 'that intrepid musical explorer', had been up to Yorkshire (all this was said jocularly, but they half mean it, you know) and fallen in love with the Black Dyke sound; the Thursday *Omnibus* programme, indeed, had caught André in the act of falling. Now he had brought them down to the Albert Hall for a big combined concert. Mr Burton was at pains to warn us that Black Dyke specialised in 'quite a different *style* of music-making, of course'; but he felt able to pat the band on the back once they had played Elgar Howarth's guide to the brass band, 'which I must say taught me a thing or two'. You would have thought that these men were apes or Martians, invited to show off their miraculous but unwarrantable skill on toy instruments. The musical part of the experience left me wondering whether something can't be done about the bass response on TV loudspeakers. The tuba, which in life gives out a beautiful furred column of sound, once again produced from the box only a lot of flaky old mumbling.

Talking of which . . . but no, Dan Maskell seemed in good shape at Wimbledon this year. Borg, the man who had performed the inestimable service of putting out I. Nastase, obviously deserved the title, though the avuncular catechist Peter West actually managed to win support for Jimmy Connors by so patently disliking him ('Well, I'll say *one* thing for you, Jimmy . . .').

Ian Hamilton is ill.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Catch-77

Every Good Boy Deserves a Favou
Royal Festival Hall
Happy Birthday, Wanda June *Bush*

There are times, admits Tom Stoppar when he feels he should

> stop compromising my plays with the wh of social application. They must be entire untouched by any suspicion of usefulne I should have the courage of my lack conviction.

There have also been times when he's u picked his tongue from the slot inside h cheek and wondered whether he was t much the extravagant and elaborate jeste Yorick run amok. Some doubts were, course, squelched by *Jumpers*, a play th proved it possible to mount a resoundi attack on behaviourism, logical positivis and several other isms in the contempora sanctum, from the very floor of the h top. But others remained, not to satisfied by *Travesties* or the later, slight *Dirty Linen*. What Stoppard calls 'Barnum and Bailey style' might not inimical to serious ideas: but could it reconciled with serious feeling? Could cope with terror and pity – or, indeed, w suffering of any substantial kind? Or h it already found its perimeter, the limits Stoppard's range, a ring of guard-towe patrolled by acrobats in yellow leotards a snuffling old professors with their demo stration tortoises and hares?

It is foolish to expect a 50-minute p to provide a definitive answer, especia when a good third of it consists of excit squawks on wind and string contribut by André Previn; and *Every Good B Deserves a Favour* does not do so. Stoppa does not, alas, turn out to be the miss link between Aristophanes and Dostoevs still less succeed in grafting together B Smart and Solzhenitsyn. We bounced of and enthusiastically in our Festival H seats last Friday, but mostly, I suspect, what we had come to know and expect; whimsical ideas, the verbal bravura, invention and dash. Only Stoppard wo have the chutzpah to suggest that the ent London Symphony Orchestra, with Pre himself reared like a chunky black-bee was actually a figment in the imaginat of an obsessional lunatic. And only could have given this character lines l 'a trombone is the longest distance betwe two points' or 'everyone is equal to pl ing the triangle – that was the first axi of Euclid, the Greek musician'. Or h had him ebulliently and amusingly ber his spectral orchestra section by secti 'not to speak of the glockenspiel'. 'T glockenspiel?' someone asks incredulou 'I asked you not to speak of the glock spiel,' comes the not unexpected reply.

But wait a moment. The setting is

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some breezy British bedlam, but one of those psychiatric 'hospitals' in which the Russians trap their political misfits; and the crazed conductor shares his cell, or 'ward', with someone unwise enough to have protested against the arrest of those who criticised the overthrow of Dubcek. Here's suffering indeed, and suffering about which Stoppard, as a decent man and a cradle Czech, must feel strongly. This alleged schizophrenic has been beaten, wrapped in wet canvas, then fed laxatives, a 'cure' his doctor offhandedly justifies on the grounds that 'medicine advances in a series of imaginative leaps'. And still he won't do what they ask, which is agree that his opinions are symptoms and dissent a disease. Only if he admits he is mad can he be officially considered sane. Only if he *becomes* mad, and actually thanks his persecutors for their irrational diagnoses and abnormal treatment, will he be pronounced rational and normal. But to do so would be to let down his political friends; so he remains in this madhouse of a madhouse.

The chief doctor plays the violin, the prisoner's son is having trouble with his teachers at school – imagery of music and, to a lesser extent, geometry gives the play its unity and point. Harmony and logic are not much respected in the Soviet state. But is intellectual coherence quite enough? It doesn't vastly surprise me to hear that Stoppard had the idea of the madman and the orchestra before he decided on his Russian setting. Neatly and wittily as he has blended the two, there is still no doubt that more of his imagination, more of his energy, more of his time and pains, more of those qualities that make Stoppard Stoppard and us his willing creatures, have gone into portraying eccentricity, and less into evoking misery. The little boy's devotion to his outcast father – 'poppa, don't be crazy, everything will be all right' – is touching enough. So is the father's sorrow at being deprived of his son. But there's no point pretending that either of them leaps to life and grabs the attention in the way the deluded musician does.

And this is in spite of Trevor Nunn's resourceful direction and Ian McKellen's taut, stark face and cliff-edge manner as the dissenter himself. But it may be partly because of John Wood's galvanic playing of the maniac. If the play is resurrected in a more conventional theatre, as certainly it must be, a less dominant and arresting actor could be cast in that particular part. It might also benefit from what economics will surely make inevitable, the replacement of the LSO by taped music offstage, because the presence of that solemn, dinner-jacketed throng, though hugely entertaining, is bound to give extra emphasis to the character supposed to be imagining it. But even though much seemed to me to conspire against the outrage we had hoped Stoppard would express, there's one moment I would wish unchanged, and that is the denouement. A long blast of doom, dread and ironic homage from the percussion and brass, and in stalks a weedy but arrogant figure in an overblown KGB uniform. Up he goes to the two prisoners and, mistaking one for the other, persuades himself that each has recovered from his delusion and orders their immediate release. It's an improbably upbeat ending, but one that serves its purpose: hippocratic power could scarcely be exercised more arbitrarily and amateurishly than it is today in the grimmer corners of the Soviet Union.

Next week, expect me to catch up with material arriving too fast for my incredulous typewriter. Meanwhile, you wouldn't waste your time at Vonnegut's *Wanda June*, though its attack on the American obsession with virility might have been apter a few years back. The piece lacks development, not to say depth; but it is packed with swaggering caricature and flaunting repartee. Bill Bailey plays the big-game fanatic and soi-disant sex-athlete who opines that 'educating a beautiful woman is like pouring honey into a Swiss watch' and that 'if I'd ever been to the South Pole there'd be a hell of a lot of penguins looked like me'. He is horrible, an ogre from the Jungian unconscious shared by nice, sensitive people like you and me.

Opera

Eric Sams

Clangour

Die schweigsame Frau *Glyndebourne; further performances on 9, 13, 21, 24, 26, 30 July and 3 August*

Curtain-rise discloses the Thames-side living-quarters of Sir Morosus, a recluse whose visibly padded cell is decked on all hands with maritime trophies. As Sherlock Holmes might have deduced from the visual clues, we know nothing whatever about our hero, apart from the obvious facts that he is a vain, wealthy, obsessive and eccentric bachelor living *c*1770 in secluded retirement from the Royal Navy and suffering from a bad case of phonophobia. The stage picture is brightly if unrealistically focused in one central image – a ship's figure-head, finger on lips, enjoining silence. The music is full of similarly neat and significant touches, often cleverly illustrated by stage gesture. The overture's vivacious theme interplay, with scoring deftly stripped to run at a fiery pace, explains that we are about to be served with a light and sugared confection, set ablaze with high spirits. For me it turned out to be, if not just a load of old crêpe, at least distastefully flat and sour. I think the audience felt the opera and the evening had both been rather sadly frittered away.

What was to blame? Not the brilliant orchestral performance under the racy yet sensitive direction of Andrew Davis. Not the generally admirable cast; nor yet the vigour and variety of Richard Strauss's musical invention, still unflagging at 70. On the contrary it was rather the very taut fittingness of his musical material that revealed the underlying flaws and strains. Perhaps his motivic inspiration was overstretched; as he explained to his librettist, it was stocked in limited lengths and had to be specially extended. As he further explained, his art needed situations and words as a scaffold. But in my judgment the libretto, executed by Stefan Zweig, lies dead on the stage; and the music ineluctably shares its fatal coldness.

I feel that Zweig worked here, as in other genres, with best-selling intentions which are as self-defeating as they are self-evident. His adaptation of Ben Jonson's *The Silent Woman* is heavily powdered and perfumed with sentimentality, and patched with derivations from Italian opera and earlier Strauss, complete with a troupe of comedians *à la* Hofmannsthal. The text is clearly intended as an act of homage to an old master, which may explain why Strauss not only failed to discern its elements of fakery but hailed it as a masterpiece on first viewing. Shorn of its mordant Jonsonian ironies and moralities, though, the mainspring of the action becomes weakened and twisted. All that happens is that a harmless old man is mercilessly tormented and gulled by mountebanks, and as a result decides, very implausibly, to reconcile his way of life with theirs. For a contemporary English-speaking audience accustomed to the post-Reformation tradition of humane comedy, much of the plot must have seemed not merely unfunny but painful.

At times it was literally the latter. The main joke is the distress caused by noise; and that point was remorselessly drummed,

Charles Tomlinson

Swiss Cottage Playground Rock

This rock-group
in quotation marks
this hair guitar amplification
is the voice of yesteryear
their permanent revolution
was won then but they go on
confusing beat with rhythm
as if feet were in a perpetual
disequilibrium with head: head
consents to be hypnotised
like this drummer with eyes closed
he is no longer young
and the song will not renew him
the words were written to be slurred
to be heard through hair
the children hear it no more
this is their atmosphere
this flow this food
is their friend: weaned on it
why should they attend its meaning
their intent
distraction will outplay this rant
between the demolished houses

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shot, pounded and hammered home. Cannons on stage right and left, as well as in the orchestra pit, volleyed and thundered. But of course the performance was not all clangours, and there were several saving graces in both sound and scene. First, the insistence on sound-effectiveness stopped well short of most of the German text, apart from the incisive cutting-edge of Peter Gottlieb's brisk and articulate Schneidebart. Again, the plot would have been even less endurable if Morosus had been presented as a truly sympathetic character; but Richard Cross managed to overcome that difficulty. Janet Perry in the name part coped well with the tricky task of presenting a basically charming character who just happens to be caught conning a victim, with occasional concessions to conscience. There was at least a basis of verisimilitude; her role is that of an opera-singer, and her lively coloratura sounded the part both pleasantly and convincingly. Jerome Pruett also filled the bill well as her husband, the scapegrace nephew Henry – the kind of theatre manager who is deservedly known by the company he keeps.

Among his troupe, Nan Christie as Isotta and Enid Hartle as Carlotta rendered precise and elegant accounts of two particularly exacting impersonations. All the cast worked tirelessly to wring the last drop of brackish fun from the rather arid characters. And there were moments of genuine comic invention, especially when Strauss flowered out from Zweig into his open expressive ideas. A pretty specimen was the musical image of ill-matched union at the end of Act Two. The voice of Morosus, who is hiding in his room to escape from his termagant bride, is made to sing the same note as hers, four octaves apart; the voices are heard, as the characters are seen, reaching the end of their tethers in opposite directions. But the general impression remained one of fire and brilliance without sustained warmth. If I heard aright, Strauss erred in following and reproducing, all too faithfully, what Jonson called 'th' adulteries of art'. They strike the eyes, and (even more) the ears; but not the heart.

Radio

Eric Korn

High Energy

Must resist uncritical delight at being back in lap of BBC, where, some of the time, actual definite people talk on definite topics. Eternal vigilance required, even at price of ear abrasion. What of the programme-changes, whose significance is concealed in the blinding glare of publicity? *Today* (Radio 4) has been bisected to yield two half-programmes, allowing more time for introductions and signing-off; as geometers know, chop up a body and the surface-to-volume ratio increases, less book and more binding, the secret recipe for dust, fluff and fog. The six o'clock news on Radio 4 is longer, permitting a dumb obituary of Nabokov: 'Despite the notoriety of *Lolita*, he was much respected as a stylist of English prose, although he also wrote in Russian.'

Neither dumb nor fluffy were the programmes on Gerard Hanley Hopkins (Radio 3 and Radio 4); Hallam Tennyson's well-conducted symposium, avoiding dustiness and matiness, brought informed and lively commentary from Wain, Fuller, Ricks, Mary Douglas and many others, leaving Hopkins less portentous, more loved. Nice to learn his piled syntax was not just device but physiologically ingrained: 'Meant to write I have every day for long,' he says in a casual letter.

Two programmes used their length to stretch their matter till the holes showed through. Cute titles are a signal. In *Everything you always wanted to know about Woody Allen* (Radio 3) Charles Marowitz let participants speak solemnly and at length about themselves. Mel Brooks claimed he was just as intellectual, measured by the number of Russian novelists he'd read. S. J. Perelman had the last word on him. Marowitz: 'Would you say that the defining difference was that Mel Brooks was scatological and Allen was not?' S. J. P.: 'No, the defining difference is that Woody Allen is funny and Brooks is not.' You couldn't prove it by this programme. In *Joseph Lister: The Bland Face of Noble Achievement?* (Radio 3) Richard Fisher tried to spin a mystery out of the Victorian surgeon's ill-documented break-down. Religious doubts? Loss of medical faith? Disappointment in love or sex? 'His ability to control his stutter in later life points to a psychic origin.' It should have led to schizophrenia, said Dr Fisher in puzzled disappointment, trying to make something out of the morbid beauty of his pathological drawings. John Prebble (*The Glencoe Inquiry*, Radio 4), may choose more obviously promising subjects but he doesn't muff them.

All in the Mind (Radio 4) had very little matter. Well-disposed scientists bit incisively into marshmallow pillows, getting to grips with a chap who talked to Beethoven ('let me say I'm an extremely hard-boiled person'), a dowser, a clairvoyant, precogniser, and a chap who went touring through the astral. He knew he wasn't dreaming because he looked down and saw his body lying on the bed. 'But what did you find out – information you could not have got otherwise?' 'I found out I could fly by annihilating gravity.' The seer, given a Van Gogh postcard in a sealed envelope, mentioned Europe and creativity and a lot else. This counted as a hit. With no data, the scientists offered no theories; the psychics had lots: high energy physics and extradimensionism. The clairvoyant came on strong: 'You're looking for scientific laws? It's an art. You can't measure it till you can measure creativity.' Or as the old story goes, those may not be real snakes but then this isn't a real mongoose.

Tanith Lee's first play, *Bitter Gate* (Radio 4), was an ironic reworking of the *Odyssey*, stodgily poetic in patches but full of good wheezes if you still have an appetite for ironic reworkings. Penelope is no patient cypher but a loom with a view, and Eurymakos, least swinish suitor, bides his time till the Penny drops. Telemachus apes Orestes, and Odysseus – how like a man – explains that all those nymphs just reminded him of wifie. The play seemed victim of a belief that Greek drama makes good radio because there's so little action, only commentary.

In the good noises department, I enjoyed hearing 'Mary had a Little Lamb' in Cornish, and the first birds singing in quadraphonic. Leslie Gardiner went to the Albanian Opera (Radio 3) where, in the midst of *Trovatore*, they sang 'Let us march forward, relying mainly on our own efforts'. *Woman's Hour* (Radio 4) went to the Chinese Opera, and then on to a slanted language class at Peking U. ('Why are Soviet goods so badly made? Not all at once, please.') *A Good Read* (Radio 4) began splendidly with the good bad poems of the schoolroom, many of which turn out to be good good poems. Charles Causley revealed that he and Helen Gardner recited *Horatius at the Bridge* together; Bernard Miles, of course, was dreaming arrrrl the toime o' Plymouth Hoe; and Patricia Beer joined in with a cheerful Noyes. Several programmes celebrated the centenary of the gramophone. Richard Bebb (Radio 3) has unearthed some unknown recordings of Irving, though they were very like recordings of Tennyson, or indeed Queen Victoria. *Singular Results* (Radio 4) was crammed with nostalgia oddities from *Workers' Playtime* ('a gay programme helps the workers most') to a desperate interview with a recalcitrant centenarian: 'I don't know anything about Tunbridge Wells.'

And the Jubilee? The fireworks sounded lovely.

Weekend Competition

No 2471 **Set by Wayne Sidesaddle**

We had a Gruesome Meals comp a year ago. This summer, doubtless, you will all be having Gruesome Hols. Anticipate and describe, please, in up to 150 words; by 22 July.

Result of No 2468

Set by Norman Moonbase

Ted Pauker in these columns once launched the limeraiku (a haiku enclosing the rhyme-scheme of the limerick). We asked for further examples of the genre.

Report **By Spiro Keats**

The Editor stomps:
'Minds like swamps!' The heat's on Keats
To clean up the comps.

Tim Hopkins couldn't have put it better This was one of those comps that (because of Moonbase's rather direct prototype) turned out to be far from ungrubby. Plus which, the number of entrants easily topped the ton, and many of you sent in more than a dozen tries. I personally found the flood of filth rather pleasing; but they tell me that there are other criteria. Still, you certainly disproved our contention that the form is a difficult one; £2.50 for each of your entries

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President Carter
Is smarter than Ford. The Lord
Loves him pro rata.

They say Prince Charlie's
Snarly; snide quotes on his oats
Are just wild parley.

GERRY HAMILL

That raddled old queen
Is the Dean. Just scents a gents
And . . . know what I mean?

According to Laing
The braing, knotty and potty,
Can blossom through paing.

TOM DONNELLY

Little Miss Muffet
Said: 'Stuff it. No go. And so,
Hands off my tuffet.'

Said Little Boy Blue:
'Same to you. You scorn my horn?
You know what to do.'

W. S. BROWNLIE

There was an old pros
From Sri Lanka, whose chancre
Grew lichen and moss.

ZELDA CHEVETTE

In Arabia,
Baby, a girl *must* get dust
In her labia.

GERTRUDE GERARD

I splutter: 'Utter
(Re bang so famed in *Tango*)
Waste of good butter!'

TIM O'DOWDA

An old soak from Stoke
Likes tarts to ignite his farts—
You should see the smoke!

C. J. PARKER

There's a cut-price whore
In Cawnpore, who hails all males:
'Bed, Mattress—or Floor?'

PASCOE POLGLAZE

There's a man at Crewe
Station who buggers muggers
So well there's a queue.

E. O. PARROTT

John Keats rose at dawn
Still forlorn, too chaste to taste
The amorous Brawne.

NICK ENRIGHT

There's a latent queer
Of Tangier, who brays at gays:
'I'm hetero, dear!'

TIM HOPKINS

Tony Benn stalks Jim
On a limb: it's Steel or feel
Tony's teeth in him.

T. GRIFFITHS

Tony Miles

Chess

No 41 **May Problems**

The May set of problems provided an excellent test of all-round chess analysis and understanding.

Problem 32 (8/2R2ppk/3p1q1p/3PpP1Q/r7/6PK/5R1P/6r1) was a fairly normal middle game combination; neat but not too difficult once one found the key idea (1 . . . Q-N4 and if 2. Q x Q, P x Q followed by R-R5ch and P-N5mate.)

Problem 33 (1qr1bbk1/2r2ppp/p2pp3/1pP1n3/1P1QP3/P3N1RP/1B3PP1/3R1BK1) required positional judgment rather than the usual tactic-spotting. Black is in some danger (White threatens P x P and also has pressure on KN2) but with accurate play he can turn the tables. 1 . . . P-B3! (Defending the N, blocking the long diagonal and immediately threatening P x P. Also possible is 1 . . . R-Q2 (e.g. 2. N-N4, N x N; 3. R x N, P-K4! or 2. P-B4, N-N3! but not 2 . . . N-B3? 3. R x Pch, K-R1; 4. R-N8ch!) and if 2. P x P, P-B3! though not 2 . . . B x P; 3. Q x B!) 2. P x P, R-Q2 with a clear positional plus for Black since all White's pieces are misplaced. The two relevant tactical points are now 3. N-N4, N x N; 4. R x N, B-R4! (1 . . . P-B3!) and 3. P-B4, B x P! (3 . . . R x P; 4. N-Q5 is messy.) The game (Segal-Miles, Sao Paulo '77) continued 3. R-B1 (White must free a square for his Q), B x P; 4. R x R, Q x R; 5. Q-B3, Q x Q; 6. B x Q, N-N3 winning material.

Problem 34 (8/1p6/8/1PP5/P1b5/8/5Nkp/4K3) tested end-game skill. The first important thing to note is that White is in zugzwang, so Black must give him the move. Hence 1 . . . K-N6! 2. N-K4ch, K-B6! 3. N-B2, K-N7; 4. P-N6 (best try. If e.g. 4. P-B6, P x P; 5. P x P, B-R3; 6. P-R5, B-N4; 7. P-B7, B-R3; 8. N-R1, K x N; 9. K-B2, B-B1; 10. K-B1, B-N2; 11. K-B2, B-R3;) and now not 4 . . . B-R3? as I carelessly gave because of 5. N1R1! K x N; 6. K-B2 drawing as pointed out by Messrs. Abrahams, Sobey and Brooks, but 4 . . . B-Q4! 5. K-K2, B-B6ch; 6. K-K3 (or 1), B-B3; 7. P-R5, B-N4 winning. Other means to the same end are: a) 1 . . . B-Q4; 2. K-K2, B-N6; 3. K-K3 (or 1), B-B5! (but not 3 . . . B x P; 4. P-B6! winning!) etc. and b) 1 . . . B-Q6 (most popular); 2. P-N6, B-K5! winning as above, but again not 2 . . . B-R3? 3. N-R1! (This line claimed many victims – including myself!)

Prizewinners to be announced shortly.

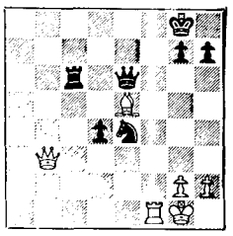
Finally a lively game from a recent Russian team event.

White: D. Bronstein **Black: A. Tsuladze**

1. P-K4, P-K4; 2. N-KB3, N-QB3; 3. B-N5, P-QR3; 4. B-R4, N-B3; 5. 0-0, P-Q3; 6. B x Nch, P x B; 7. P-Q4, N x P; 8. R-K1, B-B4; 9. P x P, P-Q4; 10. N-Q4, B-Q2; 11. N-QB3, P-QB4; 12. N x P, N x P; 13. N-B6ch, P x N; 14. P x Pch, B-K3; 15. Q-B3, N-R6ch! 16. K-B1, Q x N; 17. Q-B6ch, K-Q1; 18. Q x Rch, K-Q2; 19. P x N, B-B5ch; 20. R-K2, Q-Q8ch; White resigned.

Problem 41

White to play. How should the game go? Entries to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than Wednesday 20 July.

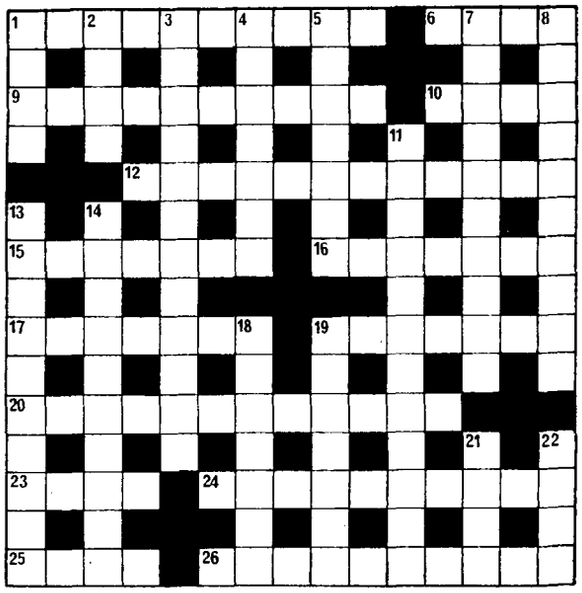


Solution to Problem 39

Good. After 2. N x P, R x N! 3. P x R? B x B; 4. K x B, N x Pch; 5. K-B1, Q-R3ch; 6. Q-B4, D-B1! 7. Q x Q, R x R mate. Best is 3. P-B3! B-R6! 4. R-KN1! B x P! 5. R x B! Q-R5ch; 6. K-B1, R-Q4 and black's position is preferable.

Weekend Crossword 1223

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1223, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 19 July.



ACROSS

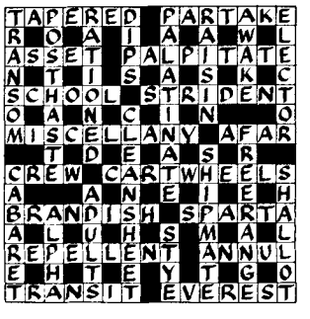
1. Socialist holding an act of rebellion in the head is disowned (10).
6. Strikes back in a fight (4).
9. Tabby tries turning into mother's help (10).
10. The mountain provides nothing for an animal to go back to (4).
12. Studies what is genuine in a young woman but makes a wrong interpretation (12).
15. Incentive that is provided without a potential slump (7).
16. 'In —— tube and iron shard' (Kipling) (7).
17. Historian who is silent with us (7).
19. Wood appears in once ruined city (7).
20. Is allowed to go punting and have a ball – a spring-time activity (7, 5).
23. Nymph among the chosen few (4).
24. Notice rare ingredients in sport (10).
25. Market town? (4).
26. Fruitful places for apes round a lake (10).

DOWN

1. Thing to wear right above a decoration (4).
2. Inns one is born in to eat up (4).
3. Still in operation (12).
4. Essay which needs rewriting to make it clear (7).
5. Woman who is the one Lear ill-treated (7).
7. Poses which turn us to spring (10).
8. Gave out afresh what king did without fool (10).
11. In this race Charles enters shelter after a soaking (12).
13. Diseases an unusual MP resisted (10).
14. Spurious call in a bit of an explosion over Henry (10).
18. This female is a goddess among rising artists (7).
19. Annoyance makes one look cheerful after tea (7).
21. Woman who comes up in a film twice (4).
22. The responsibility is ours (4).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1221



Prizewinners to No 1221

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Vol. 94 No. 2416

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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company) 01-836 6404. Recorded booking info: 01-836 5332 'The Comedy of Errors', 'Much Ado About Nothing' and 'Romeo and Juliet' in repertoire. See daily press for dates and times. With : 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' (next perf. 19 July), Ibsen's 'Pillars of the Community' (prevs from 27 July). Book now for RSC's 'Warehouse' season 01-836 6808. RSC also at Piccadilly Theatre in 'Wild Oats'.

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CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST MOVEMENT: Ignatius Chigwendere, Gen. Sec. of Catholic Commission for Racial Justice, on 'Southern Africa'. House of Commons (room booked by Ron Lewis MP) Tues. 12 July, 8 p.m. All welcome.

ERNIE ROBERTS, Michael Barratt Brown and Mick Costello—A debate on 'Industrial Democracy'. 7.30 11 July, Manning Hall, University of London Union, Malet Street. Part of the Communist University of London.

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Incorporating 'The Nation', 'The Athenaeum' and 'The Week-end Review'. Registered as a newspaper. Printed in England by Eden Fisher (Southend) Ltd. Published by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co. Ltd. at Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ. Second class postage paid at New York NY.

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